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The Role of Public Relations and Public  
Diplomacy in Building Libyan Relationships  
with Italy in the Gaddafi and Post-Gaddafi  
Era.

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PhD

2017

The Role of Public Relations and Public  
Diplomacy in Building Libyan Relationships  
with Italy in the Gaddafi and Post-Gaddafi  
Era.

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requirements of the University of Northumbria  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Relationships between Libya and Italy, both during and post Colonel Gaddafi's rule, have witnessed many developments and changes, with the Italian colonialism of Libya from 1911 to 1942/1943 playing an important role in shaping those relationships. Thus, this thesis seeks to examine the roles of Public Relations (PR) and Public Diplomacy (PD) in building the Libyan-Italian relations. In order to explore those roles, the Grunig and Hunt's (1984) Four PR Models, and the two International Models, have been applied. Furthermore, Relationship Management has been applied as a general theory of PR.

For the purpose of this study, twenty Libyan and Italian diplomats, including Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers and Ambassadors, were interviewed. Significant attention has been paid to the process of selecting the sample, where the method of purposive sampling has been selected as the most appropriate qualitative method for this study. Moreover, the thematic analysis technique has been applied in order to identify patterns and meaningful themes about the phenomenon under investigation.

The results of this study reveal that PR and PD, as important communication tools, have played a significant role in building the Libyan-Italian relations. Furthermore, it has been made clear that the Libyan and Italian diplomats, had been aware of practising the original four models and the two international models. This study has also found evidence suggesting that these models could be applied to the field of PD. Furthermore, the two-way symmetrical model, the cultural interpreter model and the personal influence model are the most suitable models in building relationships between governments as they are considered to be the bridges that connect PR with PD in terms of theory and practice. Findings of this research have also shown that there are convergences between both fields, especially concerning their roles in building relationships; however, a difference between the fields does also exist.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

Arab Public Relations Society	APRS
European Union	EU
General People's Congress	GPC
General National Congress	GNC
Government of National Accord	GNA
House of Representatives	HoR
International Association of Business Communicators	IABC
International Public Relations Association	IPRA
Middle East Public Relations Association	MEPRA
National Hydrocarbon Corporation (Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi)	ENI
National Transnational Council	NTC
North Atlantic Treaty Organisation	NATO
Public Diplomacy	PD
Public Relations	PR
Public Relations Society of America	PRSA
United Arab Emirates	UAE
United Kingdom	UK
United Nations	UN
United States of America	USA
Weapons of Mass Destruction	WMD

## **DEDICATION**

To the soul of my Mother. Oh Allah, forgive her.

To the most important person in my life, "my Father". May Allah prolong his age.

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My greatest and deepest appreciation go to my best friend **Mohammed Zidane** who was by my side throughout the data collection process, and to **Dr. Katerina Spyrou** for her support throughout this project.

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I also confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas, and contributions from the work of others.

Any ethical clearance for the research presented in this thesis has been approved. Approval has been sought and granted by the Northumbria University, the Faculty of Arts, Design and Social Sciences Ethics Review on 02/02 /2016.

I declare that the Word Count of this thesis is (76,000) words.

Name: Suliman Saleh

Signature:

Date:

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

This chapter seeks to present and introduce the main concepts that will be investigated in this thesis. The first section presents the background of the study (1.1), where PR and PD are considered to be the main concepts behind this research. In addition, this section highlights the purpose of both fields in the study and presents their definitions in the context of their roles in building relationships. Finally, the section concludes with studies that emphasise the overlap between PR and PD in the context of building relationships.

The second part (1.2) of the introduction presents the aims of the study. The core objective of this thesis is to examine the role of PR and PD in building the Libyan-Italian relations during and after the fall of the Gaddafi regime. A special attention is paid towards highlighting the various developments and changes that the two countries have experienced over the years with regards to their relations.

The section (1.3) outlines the researcher's justifications for undertaking this study as well as the importance of the study. In this part, I assemble and present scientific justifications for conducting this study in addition to personal justifications derived from my academic background. Furthermore, this section includes justifications concerning the rationale behind selecting Italy as a case study for evaluating the role of PR and PD in building relations with Libya. This section also presents the reason behind selecting the period of the study. The final section (1.4) of the introduction concludes this chapter by presenting the structure of the study, which consists of seven chapters, each devoted to a specific subject.

### **1.1. Background of the Study**

The rapid changes and developments in the political, economic and social fields, fuelled by the recent explosive rise of modern technology, have played an effective and important role in



shortening distances among nations. In this respect, Mutsvairo claims that “there seem to be no known geographical boundaries for the digital revolution which the world is currently witnessing” (2016, p. 3). Thus, there is no alternatives for governments worldwide other than seeking techniques and methods to connect with each other, especially in the context of building strong and mutually beneficial relationships. In contemporary societies, more attention is being paid to the importance of PR within the praxis of governmental and non-governmental organisations along with various other institutions. This is because of the increasingly effective role that PR plays in driving the success of these institutions, enabling them broadly to coexist with their publics, effectively gaining their support. PR as a discipline has become invaluable within these organisations, especially in drawing up policies and strategies as well as building reputation to the image of an institution (Nkana, 2017; Ünal Çimçek, 2017). Likewise, contemporary PD is practised by governmental and non-governmental organisations in order to build relationships with their publics. In this respect, as argued by Golan (2015), Gregory (2011) and Ki (2015), building relationships among nations has become the core of PD. However, the changing nature of society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century brings its own requirement to re-evaluate the phenomenon of PR as well as PD; a challenge put forward by the onward march of globalisation. Today, those factors, without any doubt, will continue to determine the rate of transmission and absorption of information as well as build relationships among countries worldwide.

Since this study combines two different disciplines, it is imperative to define their meanings as used for the purpose of this research. Like PD, a literature review has revealed several definitions of PR. It is worth mentioning that in this study PR and PD are perceived as communication tools (managerial functions) that have been used in order to build or maintain the Libyan-Italian relations. In this respect, Cutlip, et al., (2000) coin a commonly-used definition of PR, which is “the management function that establishes and maintains mutually

beneficial relationships between an organisation and the public on whom success or failure depends” (p. 6). By the same token, one of the most prominent definitions of PD was provided by Tuch (1990), who states that PD is “a government’s process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation’s ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and policies” ( p. 3).

Hence, the main focus of this research is to study the convergence between PR and PD, as communication tools, in terms of their roles in building relationships between Libya and Italy. In this respect, Signitzer & Coombs (1992) assert the existence of a convergence between both fields. Furthermore, they call for more empirical studies that link PR and PD in terms of building relationships. L’Etang (2009) finds three significant overlaps between PR and PD: representational, advisory and dialogic. In the same vein, PRIA (2013) argues that PR and PD are two sides of the same coin. Moreover, Fitzpatrick et al., (2013) emphasise that the similarity between PR and PD is a natural process. Vanc & Fitzpatrick (2016) also endorse this point when they assert that both fields share not only similar philosophical but also practical dimensions. Most recently, Dodd & Collins (2017) assert there is a significant association between PD approaches and PR message strategies.

It should be noted that the 9/11/2001 attacks in New York preceded a ubiquitous interest in PR and PD, as several scholars offered various standpoints on the two emerging disciplines. For example, Kruckeberg & Vujnovic (2005) find that PD of the American markets do not rely upon international relations models, but are driven by theories and models emerging from the PR discipline. Another interesting study by Dutta-Bergmann (2006) notes that a PR approach to PD based on mutual dialogue and respect will assist cultures to move forward. Furthermore, Melissen (2005) argues that the operation process of foreign ministries throughout the world has strong similarities with the PR operation process. Not to be outdone, Signitzer & Wamser (2006) argue that the core strategic communication functions of organisations or nation states

deal with the consequences between a sponsor and its publics. The existing literature reveals the presence of a debate about nature and the influence of PR and PD in building relationships. Thus, taking into consideration the significant work of Fitzpatrick et al., (2013), L'Etang (2009), Signitzer & Coombs (1992), and Vanc & Fitzpatrick (2016), it becomes clearer the convergence between PR and PD particularly in terms of their roles in building relationships. Therefore, this study seeks, with specific reference to Libya's relations with Italy, to investigate the accuracy and reliability of the proposition that PR and PD can serve as effective communication tools for building relationships among nations.

## **1.2. The Aims and objectives of the Study**

This PhD thesis aims to examine the role of PR and PD in establishing Libya's relations with Italy in the Gaddafi and post Gaddafi era. Libyan-Italian relations have witnessed many different stages starting with Italy as an enemy and coloniser and ending up as the closest partner of Libya in many domains. For instance, during Gaddafi's rule, the relations between the two countries were 'shaken' for decades due to several reasons including the international isolation, and Gaddafi's demands for an apology for the period of Italian colonisation of Libya, the payment of compensation for damages caused by colonialism as well as uncovering the fate of the exiled Libyans to Italy. After the fall of Colonel Gaddafi in 2011, relations between the two countries have since remained stable and unchanged. However, the aftermath of the Libyan revolution of 2011 have left the country trying to strengthen its political and diplomatic relations with the West, most importantly Italy. This is one of the reasons behind selecting this country as a case study in this research study.

It is worth mentioning that at the outset of the Libyan revolution in 2011, Gaddafi's relationships with Italy took a major shift as Italy withdrew political support for his regime. In response, Gaddafi sought rehabilitation into the 'international community' by using USA PR

firms during the revolution to polish his regime's image in an attempt to restore legitimacy, and offering the West access to Libyan oil in exchange for political acceptance (CNN, 2011). More specifically, in 2011, Gaddafi employed the Monitor Group, a Boston-based consulting firm to publicise and enhance the image of the "new" Libya and to introduce Gaddafi as a thinker and an intellectual (CNN, 2011). However, the new Libyan leaders (NTC) succeeded in convincing Italy to abandon Gaddafi's regime, with Italy declaring its support to the NTC as the sole legitimate body in the country during the early stages of the revolution.

According to all of the above, these preliminary discussions serve to demonstrate that there is indeed a need to examine the role of PR and PD in building relationships from the Libyan standpoint. As such, this study aims to:

- Evaluate the significance of the role played by PR and PD in building the relationships between Libya and Italy;
- Investigate problems that affected Libya's relations with Italy before the fall of the Gaddafi regime, and what roles were played by PR and PD to overcome these issues;
- Find out what kind of methods the NTC as well as Libya's successive governments have used to build or maintain Libya's ties with Italy, and
- Explore the convergence between PR and PD in terms of their roles in building relationships using the Libyan-Italian case study.

Therefore, the research questions that have been investigated in this study are:

**The underlying research question:**

- To what extent have PR and PD helped Libya in building relationships with Italy before and after the fall of the Gaddafi regime?

**The secondary questions:**

- What problems affected Libya's relations with Italy before the fall of the Gaddafi regime?

- What strategies has the new Libyan regime used to establish and ameliorate Libya's ties with Italy?
- In light of the Libyan-Italian case, what are the similarities and the differences between PR and PD in terms of their roles in building relationships?

### **1.3. Study Justifications and Importance**

Before February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011, especially the preceding ten years, Gaddafi's regime adopted different kinds of diplomatic agenda with the 'elite' establishments in European countries, particularly Italy, in order to build a new era of relationships (Blanchard, 2011; CNN, 2011). For many years during Colonel Gaddafi's rule, the Libyan-Italian relations were perceived as thorny and unsteady (Mezran & De Maio, 2007). However, Gaddafi succeeded in building a new era of relationships with several Western countries including Italy. For instance, before the Libyan revolution gathered momentum at its outset in 2011, Gaddafi had sought the much-needed political backing from the West, and chiefly from the Italy, as a way of renegotiating his way back to international political legitimacy (CNN, 2011). At the same time, the NTC sought to mobilise international support against the Gaddafi regime, particularly from Italy which had special relations with Gaddafi, to abandon his regime and recognise it as the sole legitimate representative body of Libya. Hence, one can argue that PR and PD did indeed have a role to play in this respect. Taking the above context into consideration, this study seeks to evaluate the role of PR and PD in establishing and bettering Libya's relations with Italy, a former coloniser of Libya.

It is worth noting that empirical studies that link PR and PD in the Arab world at large and Libya in particular are scarce. In this respect, there have been calls from many scholars for conducting more studies that link both fields in terms of their roles in building relationships, especially in developing countries (e.g. Fitzpatrick et al., 2013; Hayes, 2012; Ki, 2015; L'Etang,

2009 and Vanc & Fitzpatrick, 2016). This has motivated me to undertake this study, which as already noted, sets to investigate to what extent have PR and PD comparatively helped in building the Libyan-Italian relations before and after the fall of the Gaddafi regime. This study draws on international literature and aims to provide a critical exploration of the role of PR and PD in building relationships. Furthermore, another reason for choosing to collect evidence in Libya is the fact that Arabic is my first language which helps maintain the richness of the data, a goal that is unlikely to be achieved by a non-native speaker.

This study is significant because to my knowledge, it is the first empirical attempt to investigate and explore what problems affected Libya's relations with Italy before the fall of the Gaddafi regime; and also, how the NTC and successive Libyan governments have utilised PR and PD to build or maintain relations with Italy.

In addition to evident concerns on the importance of PR and PD in terms of their influence on building relationships among countries, the importance of this study could be summarised in the following points:

- There is no existing study dealing with the topic under investigation in the Arab World. In particular, this topic has yet to be studied in light of the Libyan environmental variables, such as the cultural, economic and political systems.
- I wish to contribute to efforts already under way to investigate the research question from a Libyan perspective, as well as adding something of significance to the literature on the subject.
- With a Bachelor and Master's Degree in Public Relations and several years of professional experience in educational administration in Libya, I hope to be able to make a contribution to the fields of PR and PD studies and their potential impact on developing the Libyan-Italian relations.

### **1.3.1. Why Italy is Chosen as A Case Study**

One can ask why Italy has been chosen as a case study to evaluate the role of PR and PD in building relationships with Libya. I have chosen Italy, rather than any other Arab or European country, as a case study for several reasons that are discussed here in light of the following perspectives:

1. Historical perspective: Relations between Libya and Italy - despite the painful colonial era spanning the period from 1911 to 1942/43 – stretch back to many decades before Italy invaded Libya in 1911. Furthermore, Libya has a stronger common historical heritage with Italy than other countries.
2. Economic perspective: The two countries have very strong economic relations, which were not affected by the years of international isolation. For instance, according to Lutterbeck (2009), Italy is considered to be the first investor and partner of Libya, especially in the field of oil and gas.
3. Political perspective: Political relations between Libya and Italy, especially during the era of Colonel Gaddafi, were characterised as thorny and unsteady because of the international isolation that was imposed by the international community on the Gaddafi regime as well as Gaddafi's policy towards Italy due to the period of the Italian occupation of Libya. However, relations later progressed to be special and privileged between the two countries.
4. Geographical perspective: The Italian coastlines are very close to Libya, with Lampedusa Island only 130 miles from Libya's coast. The importance of this perspective can be understood by considering the role that Libya plays in fighting illegal immigration in the Mediterranean basin.

### **1.3.2. Period of the Study**

As argued by Ronzitti (2009), despite the fact that the Libyan-Italian relations during Gaddafi's era were characterised as being shaky and unsteady, they never ended. However, in the late nineties, Gaddafi changed his policy towards Western countries, Italy included, when his regime started negotiating with them. More precisely, the year 1998 witnessed the first time that Libya and Italy signed an official agreement, the so-called "Joint Communiqué". This declaration was considered as the first step towards normalising ties and starting negotiations between Tripoli and Rome. For this reason, I have decided to begin the study from 1998, which is the date on which both countries started negotiations about the outstanding issues relating to the period of the Italian occupation of Libya, until the beginning of data collection in August 2016.

### **1.4. Structure of the Study**

The thesis is divided into seven chapters, each unfolding a developmental sequence towards a full understanding of the extent to which PR and PD have comparatively helped Libya in building relationships with Italy before and after the fall of the Gaddafi regime. Furthermore, this thesis seeks to discover strategies that assisted the Gaddafi regime as well as the new Libyan leaders in re-establishing or maintaining Libya's relations with Italy.

Chapter One is the preface of the thesis and discusses the background of the study; the aims, and the justifications and importance of the study.

Chapter Two, 'Libyan Culture and Context', presents an overview of Libya's historical background in light of political, economic, religious and cultural aspects. It is worth noting that the aforementioned contexts have a special importance in the Libyan society because its current structure, whether cultural, social or otherwise, was heavily influenced by Western countries,



particularly Italy. This chapter also discusses the origins and the development of PR in the Arab world as a whole and Libya in particular.

Chapter Three provides an important insight into the existing literature on PR and PD strategies in terms of their roles in building relationships. In addition, this chapter pays attention to the significant PR models, as presented by Grunig and Hunt's (1984), as well as relationship management as a general theory of public relations. Additionally, the convergence of PR and PD is discussed in thorough detail.

Chapter Four introduces the methodology utilised in conducting this research study, including the research design, sampling and population and data collection. Furthermore, a thematic analysis is presented in great details, and how has been employed in this study. Considering the complexity of exploring the 'hidden' mechanisms and structures that contribute significantly to the development of PR and PD nation; twenty qualitative semi-structured interviews with elite Libyan and Italian diplomats have been conducted.

Chapter Five is the first analysis chapter and examines PR and PD in terms of their roles in building relationships between Libya and Italy during the Gaddafi era.

Chapter Six is the second analysis chapter and offers a critical exploration of the roles of PR and PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy after the fall of the Gaddafi regime.

Chapter Seven is the final chapter, where multiple reflections on the study questions, content, methods and implications as well as the contributions of the study to the current knowledge are presented.

## **Chapter 2: The Libyan Context**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter's aim is to provide a context for the role of PR and PD in establishing and re-establishing Libya's relations with Italy in the Gaddafi and post-Gaddafi era. To achieve this, the chapter explores the historical background, political, economic, religion and cultural aspects, which are important attributes. Some studies have emphasised the importance of the historical development (Abdelgader, 2012; Almutairi, 2013; Pazama, 1994; Fagih, 2008). Crystal (2005) highlights the importance of the historical background insofar as understanding the policy, custom, tradition, and culture of particular state and its impact towards foreign relationships is concerned. The historical context is especially important in Libyan society because its current structure whether cultural or social was heavily influenced by Western country particularly by Italy. As such, this chapter comprehensively analyses Libya's cultural, religious, economic, political discourses, exploring the country's diplomatic relationship with Italy before, during and after the Gaddafi era. Furthermore, the chapter examines pre and post-colonial Libya, assessing historical and contemporary Libyan-Italian relations. In the same vein, a wide range of studies (see Abdelhay, 2014; Diab, 2010; Gregory, 2007; Obeidi, 2001) have asserted that the cultural context of a country is of paramount importance especially when exploring building relationships between countries. It goes without saying that to understand the present state of relations whether economic, political, and diplomatic, between Libya and Italy; one has to fully comprehend origins of that connection. This chapter, apart from making an attempt to understand the origins of this relationship, also focuses on PR in the other Arab countries and concludes with PR in Libya in terms of its current status in the public and private sectors.

## 2.2. The Etymology and the Emergence of the State

The root word "Libya" can be traced back to ancient sources as a geographical name that has been used by the earliest historical epochs, however, the specific name by which it is known in the modern international domain, began only after the Italian colonization of this country in 1911 (Baldinetti, 2014). Its origin was not known exactly, however, it was documented in the ancient Egyptian scriptures as far back as four thousand years ago (Sharaf, 1964). When the ancient Greeks came to North Africa in about the seventh century BC, they applied the word "Libya" on all the nearby areas that were surrounded by five of their popular cities (Bntajulas) (Pazama, 1994). These are the cities that are currently known as Benghazi, Tokrah, Almaraj, Shahat and Soussah.

The Greek Philosopher, Herodotus, wrote a general description of these areas in terms of their natural geography, elements of the place, the tribal organization and aspects of their lives in the fifth century BC (Sharaf, 1964). The name "Africa" itself was not used at that time and that the word "Libya" was in fact synonymous with the entire continent. Even some writers, including Herodotus, divided the known world at that time into three continents: namely Libya, Asia and Europe. Furthermore, this point was agreed by some Muslim geographers, such as Al-Bariony who lived in the 11<sup>th</sup> century (Sharaf, 1964; Pazama, 1965).

The name "Libya" was not frequently used by Muslims, but the use of the names "Cyrenaica" (Eastern Libya) and "Tripoli" (Western Libya) was common among them, despite the fact that the two regions were politically united under one government. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, the name Libya was not commonly used, and names of its regions continued to follow the Arab style; Arab writers continued to use the two words *Cyrenaica* and *Tripoli* to refer to Libya (Baldinetti, 2014). Perhaps the first to apply the name Libya on the present habitats colonised by Libyans is the Italian writer "Menotlli", who used it as the title of

*Bibliography* published about the country in 1903 (Menotlli, 1903). However, the first time that this name "Libya" was recorded in the modern international political context, was in the document which was announced by Italy's sovereignty over Libya in 1912 (Cited in Sharaf, 1964).

Libya remained under Italian sovereignty until 1942, when British forces successfully removed the Italian and the German armies from North Africa during the Second World War. At this time, Cyrenaica and Tripoli were under British military rule while Fezzan was held under French military rule. This situation continued until the whole country declared independence according to the decision of the United Nations (UN) in 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 1951 and turned into a federal Kingdom comprised of three states which were Cyrenaica, Tripoli and Fezzan (Alsallaby, 2007).

The acronym of this territory underwent a series of transformational changes from different compound names before it's called as LIBYA. It remained a Federal state and until the so-called Al-Fateh revolution of September 1969, when its name was changed to "Arab Republic of Libya" (Alsharef, 2001). On March the 2<sup>nd</sup> 1977 it became the "Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya". Then, in 1986 it became "The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya". After the revolution of February the 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011, the General National Congress (GNC) was elected and in the first session they agreed on the name Libya (General National Congress, 2012). Islam is the official state religion and Quran is the law of the society; Arabic is the official language adopted in Libya (Alsharef, 2001).

### **2.3. The Language**

In Libya, Arabic 'the Language of the Quran' is the official language and spoken by the vast majority of the Libyan populace. Libya is a host to a multiplicity of regional dialects; for instance, the slang in the East Libya is different from the West. In Libyan schools and

universities, English language is taught as one of main language alongside Arabic. In addition to English, there are some other languages for example, French and Italian. Currently, some of the older generations still speak Italian because of the many Italians who reside in the country who have established their businesses in Libya (Constitution of Libyan, 1951; Shareia, 2006).

This is in spite of the fact that Arabic is predominantly spoken in Libya. However, there are some villages in the countryside and communities that speak the Berber language ‘Tamazight’. The vast majority of Amazigh live in some cities in the West of Libya ‘Nafusa Mountains’. There is also the ‘Tabu’ language spoken by the minority Tabu in some areas such as Alkufra, Morzaq, Obari and Alkatron. Nevertheless, it is important to note that all these diverse and multilingual tribes understand and speak fluent Arabic (Abdelgader, 2012; Metz, 2004).

## **2.4. The Religion**

The official religion in Libya is Islam. According to the Libyan Constitution (1951), “Islam is the Religion of the State and the principal source of legislation is Islamic Jurisprudence (Sharia)” 95% of Libya’s population are Muslims. The vast majority of Libyan Muslims are Sunnis, 5% belong to other sects or religion, most of them non-residents living in Libya permanently (Fagih, 2008). Therefore, “Islam is the official religion, and almost the entire population adheres to the Sunni branch of Islam. There is no significant Shia presence in Libya” (Division, 2005, p. 6). Some studies have shown that Jews lived in Libya more than 1200 years, before Islam was introduced by Omar Abn Alas in the seventh century (Abdelgader, 2012; De Felice, 2014).

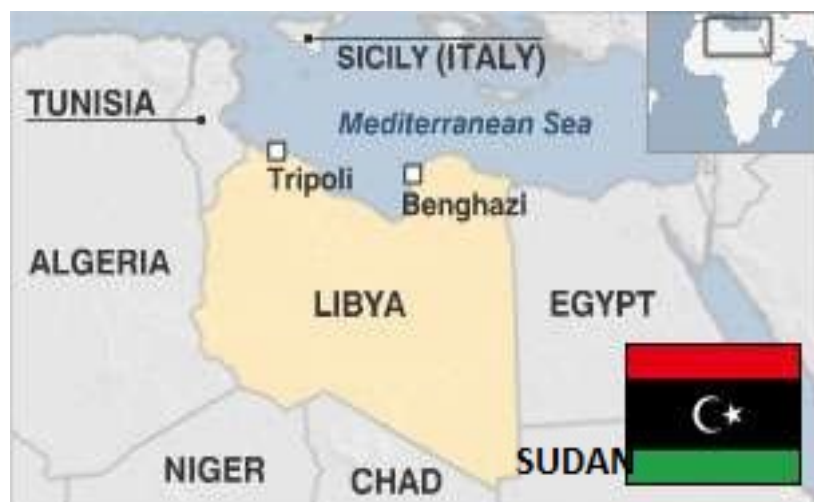
In fact, the Islamic religion has played a significant role in various sectors of life in Libya, including that of the relationship between Libyan families and their daily life such as economic aspects of buying and selling goods; thus it facilitates the cohesion of Libyan society as well as unify the people of Libya. In the same vein, Fathaly & Palmer pointed out that:

The strong role of religion in a traditional Islamic society like that of Libya has produced a society with special feature. Conservative attitudes have been predominant in every respect. Values and behaviour have been a function of religion background and attachment; hence evaluation and acceptance of innovation and change have been subject to religion beliefs and notions. Libyans have looked to the 'Quran' as a source of, and guide, for the correct action. The supreme laws have been the laws of God (1980, p.26).

## 2.5. Geographical Location and its Importance

Libya occupies an area of approximately 1,900 km in the north of the African continent, which stretches from the Mediterranean Sea in the North, to the Republic of Niger and Chad in the South and from the borders of Egypt and Sudan in the East, to the borders of Tunisia and Algeria in the West (see, Figure 2. 1).

**Figure 2.1: Map showing Libya with its neighboring countries**



**Source: BBC World**

The current Libyan border has been drawn under a number of agreements which were held mostly during the fifty years that preceded independence between Turkey and then Italy, which ruled the country in that period and between both Egypt to the east and France, which were ruling countries adjacent to Libya from the south and west sides. The geographical location of

this country played an important role in its political history. It extends, as previously mentioned, for a distance of 1,900 kilometers on the southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea; its only separation from Europe is by this sea (Sharaf, 1964).

There is no doubt that the strategic geographical location that is occupied by Libya was a key factor in the history of Libya's political and civilization through the ages. This has brought with it historical political pressures on the country. However, it explains why Libya was, and still remains, the victim of colonialism and external forces (Hamdan, 1996). According to Sharaf (1964), the following are the most important factors for the location which gave Libya its advantage in international politics and diplomatic relations:

1. It represents a key connection between the Eastern and the Western Arab countries, especially as it is related to most of these countries historically and culturally, such as Egypt, Sudan, and Tunisia.
2. Its position in the Mediterranean basin has been of great strategic importance as it can benefit from maritime activity; also it makes it a launching pad to both Europe and Africa.
3. Libya occupies a large area in Africa, ranging between 1,900 and 2,000 km. Its Sudanese and West African borders have played an important role in the past in the area of transport and trade between the Mediterranean and the countries of sub-Saharan Africa. This has additionally increased the importance of these routes especially after the discovery of oil in Libya.

## **2.6. Libya during the Period of Foreign Occupation 1000 BC- 1960**

Libya like many Arab countries has been exposed to years of brutal foreign colonialism, ranging from Turkish rule to European occupation including military conquest by Italy, Britain, and France. The Ottoman rule in Libya continued for more than 400 years followed by the Italian invasion on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 1911 which continued for more than thirty years during

which the Libyan people lost many martyrs in defense of their land (Abdelgader, 2012; Ham, 2007). Since then, Libya was put under the trusteeship of Britain and France (Alsharef, 2001). On the 24<sup>th</sup> December, 1951 Libya gained its independence officially and joined the board of the UN, the League of Arab States and most international organisations and bodies. The country played an important role on both a continental and global level (Alsallaby, 2007). During the period of foreign occupation, building Libyan institutions were affected by several elements such as the lack of educated people as well as the absence of financial resources. Moreover, Libyan people were suffering a desperate situation in various fields, ranging from health, educational or social sectors etc. (Alsharef, 2001).

### **2.6.1. Social Structure**

The inhabitants of the Libyan territory were solely dependent on agriculture before the discovery of crude oil. According to Alsharef (2001), the Libyan population during the period of foreign occupation could be divided into the following sections:

- 1 Urban population (35%)
- 2 Rural population (44%)
- 3 Bedouin population (21%)

Significantly, the standards of living among these groups vary in customs, traditions and standard of living.

### **2.6.2. Economic Situation**

#### **2.6.2.1. Agriculture**

Nearly a quarter of Libya's population worked in the agricultural sector. However, and in spite of its large area, the cultivated region did not exceed 1% of the general area of Libya (Zwaoh



& Mustafa, 1967). The reason why the country did not take advantage of all of this agricultural land was due to some natural and other unnatural conditions. For example, the lack of water and desertification, as well as the late-development of the agriculture sector had affected the prosperity of the agriculture land during this period (Alsharef, 2001).

#### **2.6.2.2. Crude Oil**

The discovery of oil in Libya has been confirmed for a long time since 1960s, but the country did not make use of this advantage except after the foreign tutelage on Libya had been lifted and granted its total independence (Division, 2005; Alsallaby, 2007).

Some studies have pointed out that the discovery of oil in Libya initially caused a lot of social problems (Abdelgader, 2012; Alsharef, 2001). This was because very few sections of society benefited from the discovery of oil at that point; namely commodity traders, land dealers and contractors. However, the medium and low income earners did not benefit from the oil discoveries. On the contrary, the discovery of crude oil initially increased the cost of living and led to a rise of goods prices and housing rents etc. Benjamin (1959) described Libya as one of the world's poorest countries, but after the discovery of oil in its territory, it became one of the richest countries in the world (cited in Alsharef, 2001).

#### **2.6.2.3. Trade**

Before the discovery of oil, Libya used to depend totally on animal rearing. Camels, sheep, leather, wool and olive oil were the most important exports, while imports included grain, sugar, tea, and transport as well as construction equipment and other medical and chemical facilities (Zwaoh & Mustafa, 1967).

#### **2.6.2.4. Industry**

Zwaoh & Mustafa (1967) identified the reasons that hampered and delayed industrial growth in Libya during the period before the discovery of oil as:

- A. Dominance of Italians on industrial projects and the exclusion of the Libyans from the industrial business.
- B. There were no industrial training institutes to help Libyans to gain technical skills.
- C. Libyan capital depended on consumption activities only.
- D. Lack of raw materials and energy for industrial activities

Therefore, the above-itemised reasons were identified as what affected the industrial development in Libya as such affected the economic situation.

### **2.6.3. Cultural Situation**

Libyan Arab people have suffered from a deprivation of learning and culture throughout the occupation periods, especially during the Italian occupation, which lasted for more than thirty years. The aim was to inspire citizens and to isolate them from Libyan culture and its Arab and Islamic identity (Alsharef, 2001).

## **2.7. The Historical Development of Libya: (Neo-colonial era)**

The historical socio-cultural background of Libya and its colonial paradigm shift has been affected by imperialism and other geopolitical influences, starting from invasions to the independent era (Abdelgader, 2012). This can be discussed as follows:

### **2.7.1. Ancient Egypt**

The first external connections were with Pharaonic Egypt. Libyan tribes attacked the West Delta "Egypt" at that time. Egyptian tribes also fought back by penetrating the Cyrenaica "Libya" as a response to those attacks. Some of these campaigns reached the inlands of the desert and its Oases. Virtually none of the Pharoanic history was without such campaigns. That

was not colonialism, as it was in defence or staged as a preventive war to repel Libyan tribes attack (Hamdan, 1996).

### **2.7.2. Phoenician Colonisation**

While the Pharaonic influence was basically limited on Cyrenaica, the Phoenician influence appeared in Tripoli around 1000 BC. At that time, Phoenician colonization began to extend its influence on commercial, navigation and marine stations. That is why its influence was on the Libyan coast represented in several cities such as Caracas and Makuma "Sirte now ", Bettis "Al Khums now", Oya "Tripoli now", and Sabratha (Fairgrieve, 1941 Cited in Hamdan, 1996). Tripoli has been a commercial connection between the land convoys by Ghadames way and the Phoenician sea convoys. Gradually, the number of Phoenicians increased and mixed and formed relationships with the Libyans at that time. The Phoenician colony then joined Tripoli to their great empire in Tunisia, which affected the political and economic power of Tripoli (Ham, 2007).

### **2.7.3 Greek Colonisation**

In the 7th century BC, Greek colonisation began to turn towards Cyrenaica where they established many cities such as Shahhat (Cyrene) (Abdelgader, 2012). It could be said that it was more of a settler colonialism than the Phoenician colonisation. A large number of Greeks settled and mixed with Libyans, but this increased the number, which led to a confrontation of the national population (Hamdan, 1996). Most of the colonists Greeks came from the island of "Terra". "Tobruk" was the first city reached by the Greeks, then continued to advance and their expansion from East to West as they took control of a number of cities such as Cyrene, turf, Benghazi, in Eastern Libya, "Cyrenaica". Libya was divided between Greek influence in the "Cyrenaica" and the Pharaonic in Tripoli until the Roman empire took place (Pazama, 1968).

#### **2.7.4. Roman Colonisation**

After the Greek empire fell entirely to Rome, Tripoli came under the control of the Romans between 146 BC and 642 AD. This was the first time that Libya politically united as an entity: "The Cyrenaica, Fezzan, Tripoli," although it was under colonialism (Hamdan, 1996). Roman colonisation, similar to previous empires, was unlike the coastal colonialism of its predecessors, Roman colonialism was a comprehensive, regional military colonialism. It was the first to bypass the coastal limits and spread into the heart of the desert (Ham, 2007). Libya continued to be united under the three regions "Cyrenaica, Fezzan and Tripoli" under Roman occupation for a period of five centuries until the advent of the Arab conquest in year 642 AD (Abdelgader, 2012).

#### **2.7.5. Arab Conquest**

The Arab conquest is considered an important point in the political transformation of Libyan history because it became a member of the Arab Islamic state; after the Arabs took over Alexandria, Egypt they moved for the liberation of Libya directly. Historians have suggested that there was no break between the conquest of Egypt and Libya (Pazama, 1968). Tribes of Bani Salim and Bani Hilal flowed from Egypt to settle in both Cyrenaica and Tripoli (Metz, 2004). The Arab conquest united Libya regionally, which included Cyrenaica, Egypt under its protection, while Tripoli joined to Africa. Thus, Libya was mainly important in the advancement from Egypt to Africa and from Africa to Egypt. Libya played an active role in the advancement of the Arab conquest from Egypt to North Africa (Metz, 2004). In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Spaniards attacked Libya and occupied it for nearly half a century, until Libya requested Ottoman Turkey for removal of the Spaniards; this was the beginning of the Turkish colonialism (Hamdan, 1996).

### **2.7.6. Turkish Colonialism**

Although the Ottomans came at that time for the Liberation of Libya from the Spanish colonisation, however, Turkish forces embarked on special type of colonisation, "religious colonialism". The Ottoman occupation began its concentration in Tripoli and then spread towards Cyrenaica and Fezzan (Abdelgader, 2012). Ottoman rule to Libya continued for more than three and a half centuries, from the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, the Ottomans were interested in Tripoli more than Cyrenaica and Fezzan, because Tripoli was always better-off in terms of resources and population (Metz, 2004).

During the period of the Ottoman occupation, the economy of the country depended mainly on the traditional domestic production as well as trade convoys and Tripoli was the link between the sea and the desert. For example, traditional African products of gold, ostrich feathers and ivory were transported to the North and, in return, European products were transported to the South (Hamdan, 1996). Since the beginning of the Ottoman presence, Libya was also besieged politically by some other world powers, specifically European, as more than one country including France, Italy and Britain organised a series of campaigns and real wars against the port of Tripoli during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Those attacks were the beginnings of the Italian colonisation of Libya (Metz, 2004).

As a result of these foreign pressures, nationalistic reactions developed against this occupation, represented as Arab revolutions and national struggle through which Libya obtained some sort of self-rule or Local Governance led by "Senussi movement". From here this movement was originated which was essentially a religious movement, later became a political movement (Hamdan, 1968). The beginnings of the Senussi coincided with the Ottoman rule of Libya, then spread strongly in most of Africa and imposed itself on the Cyrenaica "Libya" during the Ottoman rule. The Senussi movement was widely accepted by Libyans and contributed to the

formation of the political life of Libyans at that time. It began to expand Westward to Tripoli and to Fezzan in the South, but this particular expansion in the south soon collided with the colonial expansion which was under the control of the French occupation. This led to a long conflict that lasted nearly half a century and ended with the victory of France. However, the Senussi avoided direct confrontation with European colonisation in the West "Tripoli" (Abdelgader, 2012).

### **2.7.7. Italian Colonialism**

Italian ambitions in Libya have existed since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but was not announced and the actual path was not taken except after unity of Italy began imposing itself among the other European powers of France and Britain. This was especially true off France which was in control of Tunisia as an extension of its presence in Algeria, while Egypt was under the control of the British occupation (Hamdan, 1996). There was also an agreement between France and Italy in 1902 to allow France to impose full control over Tunisia and to allow Italy to enter and control Libya (Obeidi, 2001). As a result of these European alliances, Italy advanced towards Libya in 1911 where it began its invasion and declared war on Turkey which withdrew in 1912 as a result of its inability to continue in militarily confrontation of Italy. It is for this reason that Italy used to consider Libya as its fourth shore of Rome (Hamdan, 1996).

#### **2.7.7.1. Italian Colonialism Stages**

Italian colonisation of Libya passed through several stages until it expanded its control over the entire Libyan territory. As described by Barbour (1958) it was a massacre of the Libyan people, who were defending their land (Cited in Hamdan, 1996). Italy used all kinds of weapons and machineries to occupy and conquer Libya under a series of stages:

1. Stage of the occupation of the Libyan coast: The Italian occupation extended its influence along the Libyan coast in Tripoli and Cyrenaica, and then continued to enter

the Libyan Desert. The "Senussi" movement acknowledged control of Italy on the coast sector whilst the desert remained under the control of the Senussi (Obeidi, 2001; Wright, 2012).

2. Stages of the occupation inside "desert": After the Italian troops controlled the coast of Libya, they started to move towards the desert "inside" in 1922 i.e. ten years into the Libyan occupation. The aim of this was to control and eradicate the Libyan resistance, which had built over the previous thirty years. The complete control of the entire country of Libya took place in 1931 (Wright, 2012).
3. Stage of stability: Italy had been seeking to put its plans and projects of settlement into place since its occupation of Libya in 1911. However, the continued fighting and the popular resistance delayed it significantly. Hence, Italy announced that Libya was part of Italy- its "fourth shore", and evacuated many Libyans and expelled them out of the country as well as taking over the agricultural lands (Hamdan, 1996).

#### **2.7.7.2. War of National Resistance**

Once Italy began to enter Libya in 1911, the Ottoman forces collapsed and withdrew from the country and did not show a great deal of resistance against Italian occupation. Since the entry of Italian troops to Libya, Libyans realised that they must defend their land and property. The leadership of the resistance at the time was the "Senussi movement" by virtue of their presence in the Cyrenaica, and then soon turned into a popular resistance of all members of the Libyan people (Hamdan, 1996).

Of course, confrontation between the Italians who possessed advanced weapons and the Libyans who had only simple, conventional weapons to defend their land were not equivalent at that time. As a result of this, tens of thousands of people were been killed, whilst tens of thousands more were displaced. Some historians estimate that the "Cyrenaica" lost one third of

its inhabitants (Obeidi, 2001). Nevertheless, the national resistance succeeded for more than twenty years and "Omar al-Mukhtar" was the Libyan national symbol of resistance. Among the most important factors that assisted the national resistance in their war against Italy were the nature of the land, and the Libyan Desert which also helped in the continuation and lengthening of the war (Abdelgader, 2012; Wright, 2012).

### **2.7.7.3. Italian Colonialism Goals**

Italian colonialism goals were declared when they entered Libya in 1911. There were two goals, namely: settler colonialism and strategic colonialism.

#### **2.7.7.3.1. Settler Colonialism**

As argued by Hamdan (1996), Italy suffered from an excessive increase in the population while suffering from the lack of economic potential. On this basis, Italy planned to make Libya a part of Italy. Italy's conquest was encouraged by Libya's geographical proximity to Italy directly across the sea. Another factor was the natural environment; there is similarity between the climates of the Italian islands bordering the Mediterranean Sea Basin and the coast of Libya (Abdelgader, 2012).

The Italian occupation followed four stages to make Libya an Italian colony: de facto policy, displacement of the native population, control over land and resettlement of the Italians (Hamdan, 1996). The stages comprise the following:

1. After the Italians dominated large parts of the Libyan territories, they began to impose a *fait accompli* through imposing laws adopted in Italy on the Libyan territory.
2. Libya's population has decreased dramatically during the Italian occupation period due to the displacement of the population. Sharaf (1964), reported that the



population before the occupation was estimated at about 1.5 million while the population in 1938 had fallen drastically to 763 000.

The population decreased due to an increased number of deaths or via external migration. The increase in the number of deaths was caused by either direct death or on the battlefield as genocide against civilians. The Italian colonisers imposed displacement and expulsion policies of hundreds of thousands Libyans from their lands hence, most of the population of Cyrenaica migrated to Egypt by virtue of its closeness to Eastern Libya, while Tripoli's population migrated from West from Libya to Tunisia (Hamdan, 1996).

3. Control over land "expropriation": Italy followed the policy of extortion of the land and confiscation of public land private properties especially in the agricultural land in each of the Green Mountain and the Libyan coast. For example, it registered about half a million hectares in the name of Italian state at the time. Italians captured the Green Mountain and expelled most of the population. Similarly, in Tripoli, Italians captured the most valuable agricultural land in each of Jafarah plain, Nalut, Gharyan, and others (Abdelgader, 2012).
4. Resettlement of Italians: the Italian occupation tried to convert Libyan soil, changing the nature of the ground through the resettlement of Italians on the Libyan soil. The Italian occupation at the time shifted hundreds of thousands of Italians to Libya and set up many schools and churches. So, many Italian names still exist in many Libyan cities (Hamdan, 1996).

The number of Italian settlers did not last long due to the World War I. In 1939, the number of Italians in Libya were estimated as 110 000, however, only half of them survived after the war, hence, the number of settlers had diminished to about 47 thousand (Sharaf, 1964).

Although the Italian occupation lasted for more than four decades, it could be said that the Italian project "settlement" in Libya was not successful. This was because Libya, at that time "before the discovery of oil" was a poor country, so it may not be deemed vital to others. Because Libya's agricultural and financial potential was very limited, it was not even enough for Libyans themselves. Occupation of Libya cost Italy lots of financial and material resources (Sharaf, 1964). In addition, the length of the period of the war in which Libyans defended their land and where Italy lost thousands of troops (Abdelgader, 2012)

#### **2.7.7.3.2. The Strategic Colonisation**

One of the main motives for the colonisation of Libya was the desire of Italy to revive the glories and the establishment of the Roman Empire as a result of competition between other European countries, which seized control of some parts of the African Arab countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria. That was why Italy considered Libya as the first step for expansion in its empire, due to its important geographical location (Hamdan, 1996). Libya's geographical location could provide an ideal model for strategic colonisation. It was considered the link between the East "Egypt," which was under the British occupation, and the South, "Algeria and Tunisia," which were under the French occupation. This was what had already been achieved by Italy at that time, where Britain was forced to pull out of Eastern Libya "Cyrenaica". Similarly, France pulled out of the South "Fezzan". So, consequently Italy extended its control over the entire Libyan territory (Baldinetti, 2014).

Therefore, it could be noted that the Italian colonisation of Libya was strategic colonisation, so that Italy could put its military bases as a starting point from which it could control Tunisia, Egypt, and Algeria, but this expansion and extension ended with World War II (Hamdan, 1996).

### **2.7.8. The Monarchy Era**

After World War II, and after Italy was defeated by Allied forces led by the USA and Great Britain, it ceded lots of lands and cities that were under its control, Libya was divided into three parts; "Cyrenaica" under British rule, "Tripoli" under Italian rule and "Fezzan" under French rule (Wright, 2012).

Despite the tough competition of Western countries such as the USA, Britain, France, Italy, and the Soviet Union to keep Libya under their control, "the founding fathers of Libya" endeavoured Libya to be united in its three territories, Cyrenaica, Tripoli and Fezzan (Division, 2005). Alsallaby (2007) explains that the founding fathers of Libya applied formally to the UN in 1949" in order that Libya gets its independence. It should be noted here that something important happened for the first time which was the use of "Public Relations and Public Diplomacy" by the founding fathers of Libya at that time. By virtue of the diplomatic role used by the founding fathers of Libya supported by some countries at the UN such as (Iraq, Pakistan, India, and America), Libya obtained its independence on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1951 in accordance with UN Resolution 289 of 21<sup>st</sup> November 1949, under the name Kingdom of Libya a unitary state in a federal state system. King Idris al-Senussi was the first king of the country (Alsallaby, 2007).

After Libya gained its full independence, the establishment of the Libyan state began, with the help of the UN. However, this establishment faced lots of difficulties, the most important of which was not the scarcity of financial and human resources, but instead social problems. Libyan society was, at that time, a tribal society relying on tribal ties (Nagem, 2004). However, the situation changed rapidly, especially after discovery of oil in 1960s in terms of increased training and development opportunities for different segments of society working in various sectors, whether it was education, health, agricultural or others (Alsallaby, 2007).

The most important thing that can be referred to, during the period of the monarchy, that Libyan state maintained in its pro-Western foreign policy through diplomatic efforts and public relations as well as building good neighbourly relations, especially with Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria. The monarchy signed many treaties of friendship with a number of countries, for example, it signed a coalition agreement and friendship with Britain in 1953 for a period of twenty years through which it received financial and military aid in exchange for building military bases in Libya (Division, 2005). In 1955, Libya established full diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union as an outcome of the diplomatic efforts dealt between the two countries and that the Soviet Ambassador papers were accepted in January 1955 Exchange (Hamdan, 1968). The monarchy continued to exist until a Lieutenant Muammar Gaddafi and his companions changed it through a coup in 1<sup>st</sup> September 1969.

#### **2.7.9. The Gaddafi Era**

On the morning of the first day of September 1969, Muammar Gaddafi and his companions at that time led a coup against the monarchy taking the advantage of the absence of King Idris al-Senussi, who was abroad to receive treatment. They carried out what was known as "Al-Fateh Revolution 1969" and later declared the Libyan Arab Republic. After that announcement, Gaddafi and his associates agreed to take collective decisions attempting to form a democratic state. However, and in spite of this agreement, Gaddafi became a dictator acting as a "head of the Revolutionary Command Council" (Anderson, 1986).

In 1971, the Liberal Officers Movement composed of Gaddafi and his associates changed its name to "the Arab Socialist Union" which became the only legal party at that stage. In fact, this movement derived its ideas and its approach from the Egyptian Liberal Officers Movement, which was headed by the Egyptian President at that time, Gamal Abdel Nasser. One of the goals of the party was the deployment of the revolutionary concept among Libyans

(Abdelgader, 2012; Vandewalle, 2012). Since the beginnings of the rule of Gaddafi as Chairman of the Revolutionary Command, he never claimed to be the head of state but rather "commander of the revolution". Gaddafi strived to protect himself from any interference which could have kept him away from power, especially from within Libya. He succeeded in doing so for more than four decades with no interest in establishing and developing the country economically and socially (Abdelgader, 2012).

As a result of his passion for the revolutionary concept, Gaddafi presented his ideas in his book, which was known as the "Green Book" in which he put up his economic, social and political thoughts. Based on this Green Book, Gaddafi announced on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 1977 "the declaration of the people's authority." The system of government in Libya changed into a complex unintelligible system based on the notion of "self-rule of the people". This government system, established by Muammar Gaddafi depended on the principle of the People's Committees - which represented the executive authority, the General People's Congress - which represents the legislative authority developing laws and other legislations and the General People's Congress (GPC) which was composed of representatives from the general public (Gaddafi, 2005; Wright, 2012).

In spite of all this, Muammar Gaddafi was in control of all Libyan institutions, and he was responsible for the GPC, the highest legislative authority in the country (Vandewalle, 2012). Gaddafi, who ruled Libya for more than four decades, "1969 - 2011" was considered the longest non-monarch leader in terms of length of rule in the world, but nevertheless he claimed that he was not a ruler and had no post in Libya, but he was just a "commander and leader" while people govern themselves (Wright, 2012). During Gaddafi's rule, the relationship with other countries was often intense. It depended mainly on Gaddafi's belief and temper and not on the

basis of diplomatic programs and most notably Libya's relationship with Western countries. As a result, Libya has long remained in isolation from the international community (BBC, 2012).

However, during the last years of Gaddafi's rule, Libya began diplomatic moves seeking to restore normal relations with the West and to integrate into the international community. This was represented by the visit of the Libyan Foreign Minister to the United Kingdom in 2004 after long years of isolation, where he was received by the British Prime Tony Blair. Blair played an important role in the return of Libya to the international community, by persuading Gaddafi to abandon his Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) (BBC, 2012). Also, the captured of the President of Iraq Saddam Hussein in 2003, was another reason that pushed Gaddafi for abandoning the WMD. After Gaddafi announced his abandonment of WMD in 2004, Libya's diplomatic relations began to change for the better with the West, where ex Italian prime minister, Berlusconi visited Libya in 2004, which was the first visit by a Western leader to Tripoli in the modern era (Alyaum, 2004). As a result of diplomatic efforts made by the Gaddafi regime, Libyan relations with Western society improved, especially with the USA, UK, Italy, France, and others (BBC, 2012). However, soon the West gave up from Gaddafi when the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011 revolution began. Gaddafi killed his own people because they came out in large demonstrations in most Libyan cities, in particular Tripoli, Benghazi, demanding him to step down from power after more than four decades (CCN, 2011).

#### **2.7.10. The 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011 Revolution**

On 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011, in the city of Benghazi hundreds of protesters of families of victims of the "Abu Salim prison", where the Gaddafi regime killed more than 1,200 prisoners in 1996, demanding to know the fate of their missing families and for the government to disclose the causes of their death (Scott-Railton, 2013). Soon, however, the police used violence against

the protesters, and demonstrations continued until the second day but in smaller numbers (Abdelgader, 2012).

On the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011, a number of Libyan cities, particularly in Eastern Libya "Cyrenaica" (Benghazi, Ajdabiya, Bayda, Toubrouk, Brega, Almarg and others) marched out in a form of popular uprising demanding the toppling of the Gaddafi regime (Scott-Railton, 2013). The demonstrations spread rapidly and prevailed in the majority of Libyan cities (Tripoli, Alzawea, Misurata, etc.) due to the fall of more than 400 Libyan citizens who were killed or wounded by the bullets of the Gaddafi regime security forces (Aljazeera, 2011). It is worth mentioning here, that the revolution of February 17<sup>th</sup> 2011 had been affected by the Arab Spring and the revolutions that had taken place in Tunisia , at the end December 2010 and Egypt in January 2011(Lacher, 2011). In this respect, Al-Rawi (2014) argues that the so-called Arab Spring emerged as part of a youth uprising in the Arab world. He contends that young people/the youth in particular "felt frustrated with the lack of employment opportunities and disappointed with the corrupt political systems and lack of social and political equality and freedom" (p. 917).

Despite many political analysts pointing out that the wealth of Libya would not make the Libyan people move against the Gaddafi regime making case of the reports issued by the Human Development of the UN, which indicated that Libya maintains first place in human development on the African level (Mahdi, 2011). However, the Libyans marched out demanding freedom, social justice, and peaceful transfer of power, rejecting the case of tardiness of life in Libya, despite its oil wealth. At that point, many analysts pointed out that Libya's oil wealth was the reason why the West moved towards Libya (BBC, 2012). Three days after the start of the revolution, the "revolutionaries" were able to gain full control of the cities

of eastern Libya "Cyrenaica". Then an urgent need for a body through which the Libyans could address international community was of paramount importance.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2011, the National Transitional Council (NTC) was formed, which was temporarily based in Benghazi until the liberation of the capital, Tripoli. As a result of diplomatic efforts that had been made in that period, the NTC was considered the only legitimate representative of Libya. France was the first country to recognise it: the French ambassador arrived to Benghazi, and the "NTC" ambassador went to Paris (Scott-Railton, 2013). The NTC became the legitimate representative of Libya and began to address many of the Arab and the West countries to support the Libyan people against the massacres that were committed by Gaddafi regime in many cities. On the other hand, the NTC presented a roadmap outlining the political vision of the Council for international acknowledgments as the only legitimate representative of the Libyan people while breaking diplomatic ties with the Gaddafi's government (Wright, 2012).

Gaddafi's use of USA PR firms during the revolution to polish its image in an attempt to restore legitimacy and to return to the international community, however, he failed to do that (CNN, 2011). On the other hand, the diplomatic efforts of the NTC continued against Gaddafi with the help of many Arab and Western countries and succeeded in the issuance of UN resolution 1973 to protect civilians in Libya from Gaddafi's regime, which killed thousands of Libyans in various Libyan cities. France, the UK, the USA and the Arab League were the most prominent countries that supported that resolution. Under this resolution, the international coalition forces, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) intervened, bombing the Gaddafi regime forces which helped the rebels to progress at various cities and managed to kill Gaddafi in Sirte on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2011 (Scott-Railton, 2013; Wright, 2012).



The death of Gaddafi and the collapse of his regime initially left Libya without a constitution and set of binding laws. Shortly following the death of Gaddafi, Libyans elected the General National Congress (GNC) as the first parliament after the revolution on the 7th July 2012, but it was not until 2014 when the current House of Representatives (HoR) was elected. While, these constitutional steps were taken to elect members of parliament and the House of Representatives to help re-establish a constitution/constitutional law, since 2014 the country has witnessed a status of a political division among political rivals. However, some of these divisions have been mediated. With the help of the UN, Arab, and other foreign countries, in late 2015, a dialogue process was held between political rivals which resulted in the formation of the Government of National Accord, (GNA).

## **2.8. The Culture of Libya**

Culture has played a very significant role in the way that Libyan people deal with each other, and with other local and international communities, organisations and governments. It can be said that there is no agreement on a single definition of Culture (Gong, et al., 2007). However, in 1952, Kroeber & Kluckhohn provided more than 164 definitions of Culture (Doney, et al., 1998). In the same context, Twati claims:

Definitions vary from the general to the specific, depending on the discipline and the level of analysis. Societal culture can be defined as the value, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour that are shared by the vast majority of people in a group or nation. Culture consists of some mixture of artefacts or practices, value and beliefs and hidden assumptions that members of a society have in common about appropriate behaviour (2008, p. 4).

In spite of this, there is a general consensus among scholars on three of the main characteristics of the Culture: firstly, it can be understood by all its members, secondly, it cannot be transmitted genetically, and thirdly, it could be learned (Fischer, 2009). One the famous definition of the culture was provided by Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown, 1961, he defined

the culture as a “process by which a person acquires, from contact with other person or from such things as books or works or are, knowledge, skills, ideas, beliefs, tastes and sentiments” (pp. 4-5 Cited in Abdelgader, 2012). Also Eickelman (2009) defines the Culture “Culture refers to a set of implicit, widely shared assumption about how things work in a society and how they ought to work-at least for one group of reference” (p. 160).

Some scholars in Arab world argue that societal institutions such as Universities, Hospitals, Social Institutions, Embassies etc., need to be studied in order to know their influence on decision-makers in the Arab countries (Sabagh & Ghazalla, 1986). Accordingly, this study analyse elements such as religion and tribe that shape the Libyan Culture; which 'tribe' is the most important of these elements, in order to understand the role that has been played by Libyan Culture in the establishment of diplomatic relations, and how it can be mobilised in re-establishing new relations between Libya and Italy?, In particular, Libya was occupied by Italy in 1911. In this regard, Hofstede (1980) provides Hofstede's Cultural Framework (representing National Culture). He defines national Culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another” (Hofstede, 1980, p. 21). In addition, Clark (1990) defines national Culture as “a distinctive, enduring pattern of behaviour and/or personality characteristics” (p. 66). There are two main methods on which researchers usually agree when discussing national Culture, these are: 1) developing classification systems; 2) “dimensionalising” national Culture (Doney, et al., 1998, p. 608).

Hofstede conducts a study on the Arab Culture in some Arab countries such as Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, confirming that the Islamic Religion plays a very important role in people's lives (Almutairi, 2013). Hofstede (2001) point out that the Islamic Religion as a significant element in shaping Arab culture:

The Muslim faith plays a large role in the people's lives. Large power distance and uncertainty avoidance are the predominant characteristics for this region. This indicates

that it is expected and accepted that leaders separate themselves from the group and issue complete and special directives (p. 384).

### **2.8.1. The Ethnic Origins of Libyan Society**

There are many definitions for the concept of 'Ethnic'. In this respect, Eickelman (2009) argues:

“Ethnicity is an observer’s term, also those who assert ethnic ties often regard them as fixed and natural. Ethnicity is often thought of as a matter of birth, but exceptions are common. The social and political significant of ethnic and religion identities alerts significantly according to historical and social contexts” (P. 163).

In this context, Division (2005) emphasises that the greater number of Libyan society identify themselves as Arabs. Also mentioned that:

Arab invaders brought the Arab language and culture to Libya between the seventh and eleventh centuries, but intermarriage with Berbers and other indigenous peoples over the centuries has produced so mixed a strain that few Libyans can substantiate claims to pure or even predominantly Arab ancestry. These Arabic-speaking Muslims of mixed Arab and Berber ancestry make up 95% of the country's population. Berbers, other indigenous minority peoples, and black Africans make up most of the remainder, although small, scattered groups of Greeks, Muslim Cretans, Maltese, and Armenians make up long-established communities in urban areas.

As mentioned before, the vast majority of population in Libya are Arabs, and the Arabic language is the official language in Libya, with the presence of some minorities that practice their customs and traditions in Libya (Abdelgader, 2012).

### **2.8.2. The Role of Tribe in Libyan Society**

The term 'tribe' as defined by Eickelman (2009) refers to “a group persons forming a community and claiming descent from a common ancestor. In the Middle East and North Africa, unlike many other parts of the world, claiming tribal affiliation often positively affirms community, identity and belonging” (p. 168). Gregory (2007) emphasis that the tribal cultures can play an important role in establishing diplomatic relations, because those tribes are connected with the same customs, traditions, norms, and rules. These include for example:

foreign service officers in embassies and foreign ministries who emphasize face-to-face communication, the priority of “the field” over headquarters, language skills, opinion elites, and the importance of dialogue; cultural diplomacy and professionals in academic institutions and NGOs who privilege exchanges, educational norms, fostering of private cultural connections, deep knowledge of other cultures, and long-term results that are difficult to predict or measure (p.345).

Tribal configuration is one of the most significant factors that influenced the formation of political life in Libya over its history. Tribes and their leaders declared armed struggle against the Italian colonisers between 1911 and 1943 (Abdelgader, 2012; Nagem, 2004). There are more than 140 known tribes in Libya, many of which are subdivided into several branches and clans. Most Libyan surnames carry the name of the tribe which they represent, and therefore one can easily identify a person's tribe simply by knowing his surname. For instance, Colonel Gaddafi (former Libyan President) comes from the Gaddafi tribe (Nagem, 2004). With regard to the origins of the Libyan tribes, Ham (2007) claims that:

In Libyan society, most tribes trace their origins to Bani Hilal and Bani Salim (or Bani Sulaim). Tribes which trace their lineage to the Bani Salim are known as Saadi (dominate tribes). In Cyrenaica where tribal loyalties remain the strong, the two main Saadi are the Gebarna and Harabi. Other tribes that fall outside this designation are known as Marabatin-most of these claim mixed Arab and Berber descent (p. 45).

The nature of Libyan society is a slightly different from some societies in the Middle East and North Africa such as Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE etc. Fathaly & Palmer (1980) state that:

The typical of Libyan family consist of father, mother, single and married sons, unmarried daughter, grandparents, grandchildren, uncles, aunts and cousins. The father or oldest male is usually the senior authority figure in the family. (Adult status is usually bestowed on fathers). Sons carry on the name of the family and return to the father's house. Daughters keep their original family name but belong to their husband's family as long as they are married (p. 23).

It can be said that the tribe plays a principal role in both Cyrenaica and Fezzan; however, it has less influence in the capital, Tripoli. Gaddafi employed it during his rule of Libya to earn tribe's support. For instance, the Foreign Minister of Italy (Paolo Gentiloni) asserts that tribes still play a significant role in solving many of the social and political issues in Libya (Barakat, 2015). Some researchers on Libyan history claim that the reason is the lack of the ability to form parties and trade unions which render tribes in Libya as the main national umbrella; there is almost a consensus that Libyan society is a tribal society and governed by the norms of the tribe (Abdelgader, 2012; Barakat, 2015; Nagem, 2004).

## **2.9. The Economy of Libya**

On 24<sup>th</sup> December 1951 Libya got its independence under the UN resolution 289 on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1949, during this time, Libya was one of the poorest nations in the world; the Libyan economy was depended mainly on agriculture and pastoralism; as well as financial aid that was granted by the UN. However, the nature of Libyan Desert 'hot and dry' and the lack of water affected agricultural production (Al-Idrissi et al, 1996; Alsallaby, 2007). Despite the fact that agriculture in Libya is seasonal, more than 70% of Libyans are employed in the agriculture sector; they contributed about 30% of Gross Domestic Product (Poortmen et al, 2006, cited in Abdelgader, 2012).

Libyan oil was discovered in 1960s and the sale of oil has played an important role in developing the economic, political and social fabric of in both the private and public sectors in Libya. As well as this, life in Libya has radically altered; and has also described as a "hydrocarbon state". From 1960 to 1969, Libya's oil production rate was estimated to be 39b barrels, while the natural gas was roughly 1, 49 cubic meters (Division, 2005, p. 7).

On 1<sup>st</sup> September 1969, Lieutenant Muammar Gaddafi and his colleagues announced the so-called "Al-Fateh Revolution". Since the early stage of the Fateh Revolution, Gaddafi was

believed to be the socialist concept which was introduced in the Green Book. According to a socialist-oriented "Derived from the Green Book" "employee were given the right to manage their project, through popular committees" (Ahmad & Gao, 2004, p. 366). Despite economic wealth in Libya, and Gaddafi's economic policies, the absence of good governance; as well as economic sanctions on Libya by the UN during 1990s led to a waste of the Libyan's precious resources (Takeyh, 2000).

Until the beginning of 2000, the Libyan government continued to practise the socialist-oriented economy 'Gaddafi's philosophy', which the outcome was:

The government continues to control prices, credit, trade, and foreign exchange, and to restrict imports, thus resulting in very little economic growth, if any, in the private sector. Agriculture continues to be the second largest economic sector, but Libya imports nearly 80 % of its food requirements. Libyans have experienced a declining standard of living, with high inflation, higher import prices, and even some shortages of foodstuffs (Division, 2005, p. 7).

After the cancellation of international sanctions at the turn of the twenty-first century, also the Libyan state made a number of economic reforms, the oil sector grew solidly especially between 2002-2003 where Libya's oil production amounted to about 1.6 million barrels per day which reflecting positive developments in world oil markets (Abdelgader, 2012). However, several reports that were published by U.S. government shown that:

A large portion of Libya's income was squandered as a result of widespread corruption and waste. Other factors that contributed to the lost income were purchases of conventional arms and efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction, as well as large monetary donations to lesser-developed countries, which have been interpreted by some as Qadhafi's attempts at influence-buying (cited in Division, 2005, p. 7).

On the same context, Abdelgader (2012) mentions that because the economy of Libya was dominated by the government, and the lack of transparency in all sectors, especially in oil sector led to corruption, bribery, and nepotism in the country. Accordingly, on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011, demonstrations broke out in most Libyan cities demanding economic reforms, freedom, and justice social that led to collapse of Colonel Gaddafi's regime. Although welcoming and

supporting the international community to elect the first parliament in Libya on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2012, establishment the new democratic state is still facing many of obstacles (Abdelgader, 2012)

## **2.10. Public Relations in Libya**

Before discussing the nature of PR in Libya in terms of its inception, development, and the role it has played in various Libyan institutions, it is important to note that there is a paucity of research in the field of PR in Libya. In fact, this study is the first in the field of PR in Libya, which combines PR and PD. This section also focuses on PR in the Arab countries and concludes with PR in Libya in terms of reality and the nature of its work in the public and private sectors. Some scholars argue that PR is a social phenomenon, which have emerged and developed the evolution of societies. PR is therefore a natural result of social friction between its members and bodies as a vital and essential human activity in its dealings with the organisations and bodies in the community (Broom & Tucker, 1989; Grunig, 1992).

PR in the Arab world has been practised for thousands of years, by Babylonian culture, Egyptian Pharaohs, and Islamic civilization (Alanazi, 1996). In the Babylonian civilization, the kings of Babylon took advantage of social, economic, and political events to impact on the thoughts, emotions, and beliefs of their people. During that time, Babylonian kings recorded daily events in old manuscripts as a sort of newspapers and used them to communicate information and instructions to their people (Sriramesh, 2009). The King's calls for staff and workers from different regions to come to Babylon in the holidays and on special occasions. It is clear that this platform enabled him to send messages to large numbers of people (Sriramesh, 2009).

In the Pharaonic civilization, priests played the role of mediator between the pharaoh as a king and his people. The priests practised the functions of PR by relating meetings held in temples,

choosing the religious and popular events and letting the public know about harvests and Nile floods (Fakhri et al., 1980). The ancient Egyptians used PR in times of peace and war, and succeeded in influencing the hearts of the people and their ideas, especially in the events of political coups or the emergence of new religions (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). Some historians of PR in Arab countries have stressed that the history of PR is due to the era of Prophet Muhammad 'peace be upon him' since 1400 years (Fakhri et al., 1980; Kruckeberg, 1996). L'Etang states that "Public relations arises at points of change and over issues where there is a disagreement over policy or practice" (2008, p. 31). Prophet Muhammad spent twenty-three years advocating the Islamic religion, using different methods of communication and PR with people; he had been in constant contact with people, meeting them in the mosque after prayer, listening to their news, complaints, and opinions (Almutairi, 2013). The Prophet Muhammad utilised the tools of both personal impersonal contact, where he sent messages to kings and princes to invite them to enter Islam. This kind of contact is one of the techniques of modern PR in connecting to people (Aldemiri, 1988; Alsaqer, 2006).

There are many studies in the field of PR in Arab countries from different perspectives such as management, business administration, social organisation and media studies (Abdelhay, 2014; Alanazi, 1996; Almutairi, 2013; Diab, 2010; Kirat, 2005). However, the concept of PR is still shrouded in a lot of ambiguity. Kirat (2005) points out that the practice of PR departments in some institutions in the Arab world does not exceed 30 years. Abu Osba'a (1998) clarifies that the delay in the practice of PR in the Arab countries. This is due to the following reasons:

1. The vast majority of the Arab countries - Libya being one of them - were occupied for a long time by the Western countries, and did not gain independence until 1950s.
2. During the foreign occupation period there were no significant economic institutions in the most Arab countries.



3. Modern management style in Arab countries was the result of connection with Western countries, and takes advantage of expertise in this area. However, the difference in the environment between Western societies and Arab societies impacts on an adoption of modern management in the Arab countries.
4. The lack of administrative institutions in Arab countries concerned with the preparation of training courses in the field of PR and management in general.
5. The absence of awareness of the significance of two-way communication between an institution and its audiences.

The role that has been played by PR in Arab countries is different from Western countries (Almutairi, 2013). In this respect, Al-Enad (1990) claims that some environmental and social factors affect the role and function that should be played by PR in Arab world. Similarly, Watson (2015) argues that Islam and social relations impact on the performance of PR. In the same context, Al-Enad (1990) mentioned that:

Public relations played different roles and perform different functions in third world countries than those played and performed in developed nations. In the Arab world, labelling public relations as "general affairs" and "general relations" may have contributed to the persistent vagueness of the nature, goals, roles, and functions of public relations. Therefore, it plays different roles. But there may also be other reasons. One of these is what we call environmental factors which not only affect the practice of PR but also dictate certain ways and methods and perhaps different goals, philosophies and values of public relations (P. 24).

Kirat (2005) also stressed that the role of PR in Arab nations is:

“secondary PR jobs such as assisting customers, guests, fulfilling hospitality functions at the expense of professional public relations, strategic planning, research and providing top management with sound advice” (p. 324).

The Arab Public Relations Society (APRS) was established in Egypt in the 1960s, and was the first association for PR in Arab world. APRS was recognised by different international

associations in the field of PR such as International Public Relations Association (IPRA) (Abdelhay, 2014). PR has witnessed great development and growth in many Arab countries during the last twenty years due to the change in environment economic, social and political (Diab, 2010). For instance, The Middle East Public Relations Association (MEPRA) is the region's leading body for PR and communication professionals and students. Founded in 2001 in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), MEPRA is a self-governing non-profit member association, established to set world-class standards for the PR and communication industry in the Arab world (Almutairi, 2013). Furthermore, whilst, PR firms in the world grew 8% in 2012, some studies in Arab world show that PR companies have grown 10.44 %, which means the importance of the role has been played by PR in these countries (Almutairi, 2013; Abdelhay, 2014; Badran, 1994; Diab, 2010). The Media Source and Media Guide's indicator shows "an average of 64% increase in listed PR agencies in the region between 2006 and 2010, with the majority based in the UAE, which experienced 110% growth in numbers" (cited in Abdelhay, 2014, p. 88). In addition, the figures of PR agencies in Libya have been added to the Figure 2.2 based on statistics published by Alayam website (Alayam, 2012).

**Figure 2.2: Public Relations Growth in Arab Countries**

Country	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Percentage
Bahrain	10	11	15	15	18	80%
Egypt	9	10	13	14	11	22%
Jordan	7	10	12	12	10	43%
Kuwait	8	7	7	8	10	25%
Lebanon	10	10	12	12	9	-10%
Libya	2	3	3	4	4	100%
Oman	3	5	5	5	5	67%
Palestine	2	2	3	3	3	50%
Qatar	8	9	12	15	15	88%
Saudi Arabia	18	17	24	28	22	22%
Syria	1	2	3	3	3	200%
UAE	58	74	87	96	122	110%
Yemen	1	2	2	2	0	-100%
Total	143	168	203	222	234	64%

**Source: (Abdelhay, 2014; Alayam, 2012).**

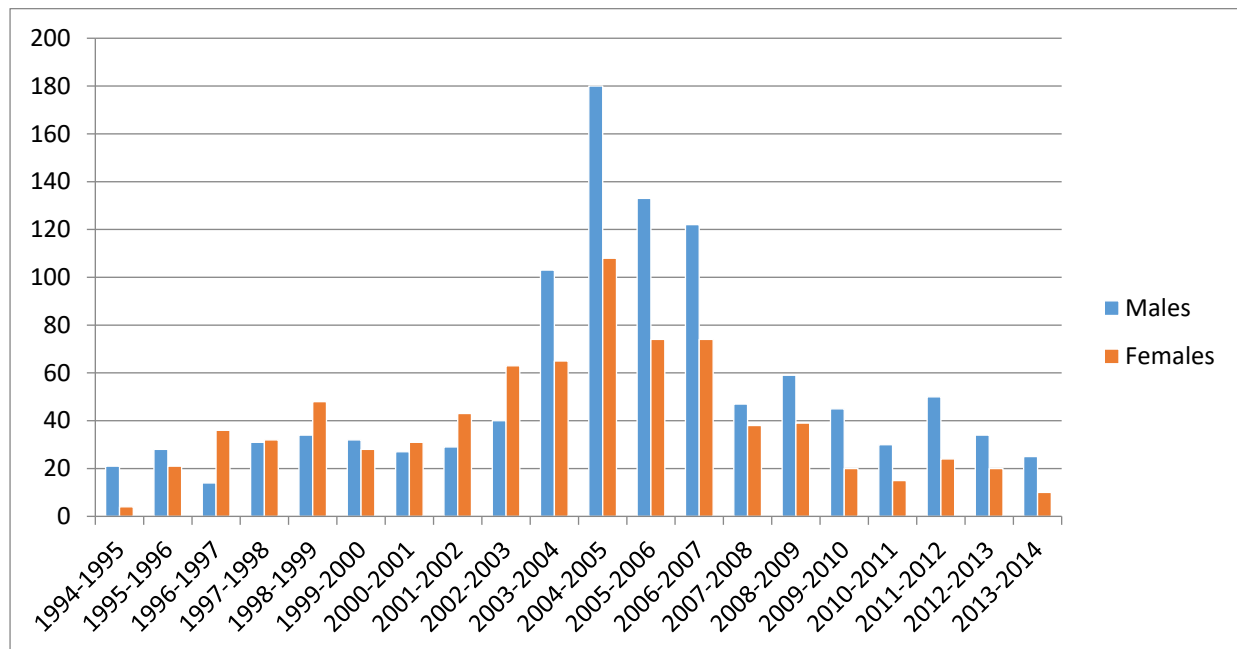
### **2.10.1. The Reality of Public Relations in Libya**

It can be said that PR as one of the functions of administration in Libyan institutions began as of the nineties in the last century. One of the most important reasons for practising PR in Libya comes from the arrival of many Western oil companies to invest in Libyan's oil fields, especially, in the last 15 years when Libya witnessed new relations with west countries (Al ghazali, 1996; Jadallah, 2004). Also Libya is one of the Arab countries where there are many of workers of various Arab and Western countries alike, and this has helped to take advantage of their experience in the practice of PR in Libyan institutions (Saleh, 2007).

The scientific concept of PR in Libya is relatively new compared with Journalism school and Radio & Television School which were both established at Benghazi University (formerly Garyounis) in the Faculty of Arts, Department of Media in 1975. However, the first time that PR was studied in Libyan universities was in 1991 at Benghazi University; this department then expanded to become Faculty of Media in 2008 as a result of importance of media in

contemporary world. Since then, many colleges and scientific departments for Media and PR have been established by a number of Libyan universities such as the Faculty of Arts & Media at the University of Tripoli (Asbeta, 2010). The number of graduates at the University of Benghazi, Faculty of Media, PR Department totalled 1,867, 1,074 males and 793 females (see, Figure 2.3).

**Figure 2.3: Number of Public Relations Graduates**

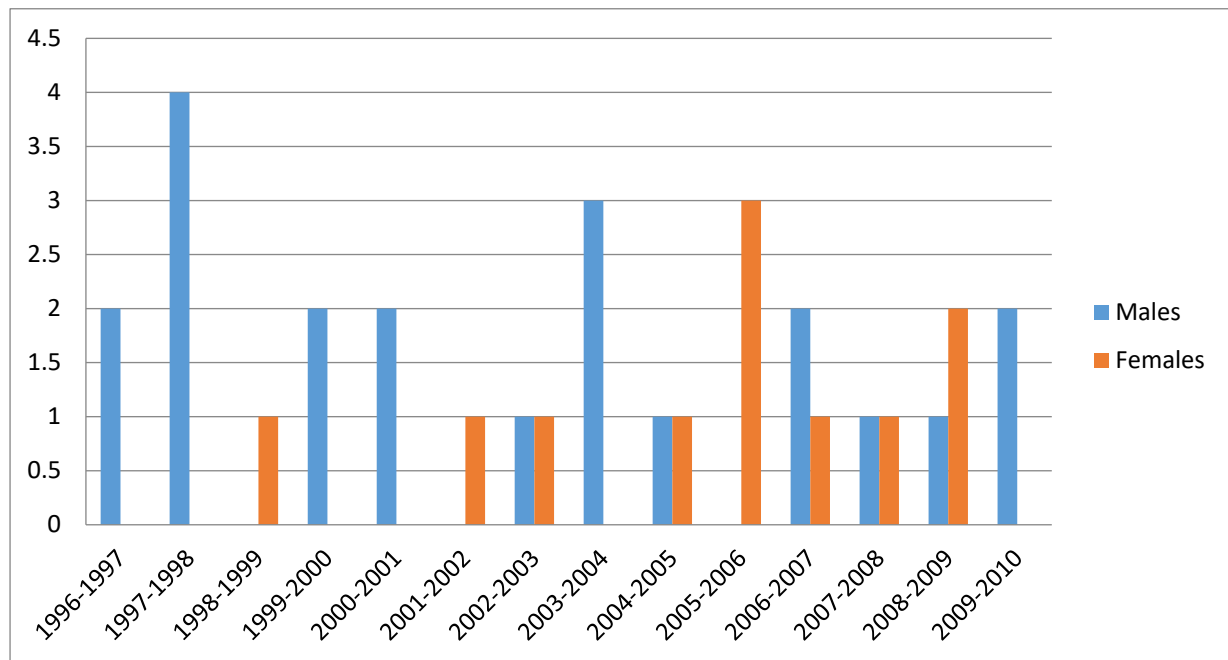


**Source: University of Benghazi, Faculty of Media, Department of Graduates.**

According to Asbeta (2010), a postgraduate program was started in the Media Department (Journalism school and Radio & Television School) at Benghazi University in 1987, while a postgraduate program in Department of PR was introduced in 1996. As of 2010, there been than 30 dissertations published in the field of PR across different sectors in Libyan institutions

(see, Figure 2.4). This shows the importance that has been given to the profession of PR, as well as the need of qualified practitioners.

**Figure 2.4: Number of Public Relations Postgraduates**



**Source: Asbeta, 2010**

Moreover, 2012 saw the foundation of the Libyan Public Relations Association (LPRA). LPRA is a non-profit association, the main aim for establishing this association is to set standards for the PR and communication in Libyan institution; an additional aim is to raise awareness of the importance of PR and the development its performance (Asbeta, 2012). In 2012, Action Global Communications - established in Cyprus in 1971- is the first international PR firm in Libya providing full service integrated PR and communications, as well as event management, media monitoring and media training (Alayam, 2012).

Despite the important role that has been played by PR as an administrative function in developed countries (Kirat, 2005), there are many studies (Alareshi, 2002; Alghazali, 1996; Altaleb, 2006; Asbeta, 2000; Bushala, 2000; Zuhri, 2003) that were conducted at varying lengths, which addressed different sectors and institutions in Libyan society. These studies have shown that PR in Libya still suffers from a misunderstanding of its concept and nature, as well as has not achieving its target and objectives; this has led to a number of obstacles that prevent it from doing its essential role; this has led to an absence of strategies and poor performance of the profession of PR.

### **2.10.2. Public Relations in Public Sector in Libya**

The rapid changes and developments in the political, economic and social fields, particularly, in the technological domain which plays an effective and important role in shortening distance among peoples. There is no alternative for governments worldwide other than looking for new techniques to connect between governments and their people (Grunig, 1992; Taylor, 2000). In the same vein, Kirat (2005) argues that “Public organisations needed effective two-way communication to interact with their publics through research, opinion polls and strategic planning and management to serve them efficiently and professionally” (p. 258).

PR is defined by Grunig, as “the management of communication between an organisation and its publics” (1992, P. 4). PR in public sector including s education, health, business, sports and police, military, etc. (government institutions) and various other institutions are being paid more attention. This is because due to the important role of PR in driving the success of these institutions, enabling them broadly to coexist with their public to gain their support and trust (Kirat. 2005). In the same context, Al-Enad (1990) mentions that:

One can safely say that public relations in governmental institutions operate in light of these communication modes. In most cases, communication is one-way, its purpose is unbalanced, and the tools are the mass media which not only publish and transmit

whatever comes from government public relations, but have no power to edit or change any part in most cases (p. 26).

He believes that the nature and the role of PR in developing countries are different from that in developed countries. One of the reasons behind this stems from a number of environment factors differences between developed and developing countries. Furthermore, Almutairi (2013) believes that PR in the public sector in Arab countries work as information offices to inform the public about issues that relate to the institution; to increase their knowledge of the relevant issues, in order to obtain public satisfaction.

Several PR studies in Libyan institutions such as (Algazali, 1996; Alareshi, 2002; Altaieb, 2006; Asbeta, 2000; Bushala, 2000; Zuhri, 2003) have shared a number of views about PR in public sector as follows:

1. Lack of understanding of most of the top managements in the Libyan institutions to the nature of the work of PR.
2. The role that should be played by PR departments in Libyan institutions is not yet clear.
3. Absence of specialists in the field of PR in Libyan organisations led to a lack of understanding of the nature of PR and explains its importance to the senior managements.
4. In most Libyan institutions, the role of the PR department is limited to receiving delegations, ticket booking and organizing social events.
5. Overlapping functions and objectives of PR departments with other departments.
6. The budget that was allocated for the PR department in most of Libya institutions is not enough which has an effect on its performance.

The most important factor can be referred to in this regard that the main role of PR in Libyan institutions is to contact with the media, special events, social activities, as well as receiving

guests and the Protocol concerts (Algazali, 1996; Bushala, 2000). However, during the last ten years, PR in Libya has witnessed a remarkable development since PR programs have been introduced in universities and institutes Libyan (Saleh, 2007).

### **2.10.3. Public Relations in Private Sector in Libya**

At the beginning of the seventies, the Gaddafi regime imposed severe restrictions on dealing with foreign countries which led to the absence of the country at the international level, as well as the international sanctions that were imposed on Libya until the end of the nineties. After the cancellation of international sanctions in 1999, the private sector in Libya witnessed a remarkable development. According to the World Investment Report by UN Conference on Trade and Development in 2009, the foreign investments in Libya nearly quadrupled between 2000- 2009 (Alrubaie, 2004). In 2004, Gaddafi regime made a number of economic reforms (AL-haj et al., 2006), which can be summarised:

1. Privatization of nearly 360 state-owned institutions.
2. Simplification of procedures to work in Libya.
3. Open the banking sector to competition domestic and foreign.
4. Allowing foreign companies to invest in some sectors such as tourism, agriculture, industry.

These economic reforms helped foreign companies to invest in Libya, especially in the oil sector, where there are more than 50 foreign companies are working in Libya, such as Total, BP and Shell, the list goes on (AL-haj et al., 2006).

The vast majority of foreign companies in Libya have their own PR Department or seek to outsource private PR agencies such as MEPRA, which is one of the most important PR agencies in the Middle East (Kirat, 2005). In addition, there are more than 16 private agencies are providing different services in the field of PR in Libya. According to Action Group Founder



and chief executive officer Tony Christodoulou The purpose of opening our office in Libya is to raise professional practices and international standards in the field of PR in Libya; seek to raise awareness between PR practitioners; respond to growing demand from existing and prospective clients (Alayam, 2012). All of that had a positive impact and helped to flourish the PR profession in Libyan institutions.

It can be said that the reality of the profession of PR in the private sector is slightly different from the public sector in Libya. However, PR in the Libyan private sector in Libya still faces some challenges because PR is a modern concept in Libya (Almagrbi, 2010).

## **2.11. Conclusion**

This chapter has provided a vital exploration of the Libyan background in terms of political, economic, religious, cultural and historical aspects. The purpose of shedding the light on these aspects is to find out the development of Libya as a country throughout the years as well as to understand their impact on shaping the Libyan foreign policy, especially with Italy. By tracing the pre- and post-colonial Libyan history as well as the contemporary Libyan history, it has been noted that the historical socio-cultural background of Libya has been affected by many colonial events starting from the ancient Egypt colonialism in 200 BC and ending in 1951 when Libya obtained its independence after Italy's defeat in World War II.

The Libyan-Italian relations from 1911 to 1951, when Libya became an independent country, could be characterised as a stage of resistance against the Italian colonisation. While the relations between the two countries, whether during the monarchy era, the Gaddafi era, or after the fall of the Gaddafi regime in 2011, will be explored in depth in chapters 5 and 6, one could make the brief assertion that the Libyan-Italian relations have gone through several different stages ranging from seeing Italy as an enemy and coloniser and progressing towards forming as close partnership with Italy in many fields.

This chapter has also presented a discussion of the development of PR in the Arab world, with a special focus on its roots in Libya in terms of the scientific concept and the current status in the public and private sectors. In summary, like many other Arab countries, PR in Libya in terms of theory and practice has witnessed a remarkable development since PR programs were introduced in universities and several educational institutions. However, there is still a lack of understanding of the PR profession in Arab countries, Libya included. Thus, this study seeks to contribute to the development of the PR field when it is linked with another discipline, namely PD. Furthermore, the study aims to investigate both fields, from a Libyan standpoint, in terms of their roles in building relationships. The next chapter provides an overview of the existing literature on PR and PD and their roles in building relationships.

## **Chapter 3: Literature Review**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter aims to present and examine two disciplines – PR and PD – in terms of their role in relationship-building. As stated already, this study seeks to identify the role of PR and PD in establishing and re-establishing Libya's relations with Italy in the Gaddafi and post-Gaddafi era. Linking PR with other disciplines positively affects the development of the PR profession, and also indicates the field's maturity (Toth, 2009). In a similar vein, Heath (2001) argues that PR theories and models should be linked with other disciplines that positively reflect on the field's development. This study supports the latter view, and endeavours to link PR with PD, in order to identify their role in building and re-building the Libyan – Italian ties.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, communication technologies have turned PR and PD into essential tools for relationship-building, as they are both used by nations and non-nation actors to build mutually beneficial relations with their publics (Golan, 2015; Hiebert, 2005). Many studies have linked PR with PD in the last two decades, especially in the developed countries for two main reasons: firstly, to find similarities and differences between the two fields; secondly, to identify their role in relationship-building among governmental and non-governmental organisations, as well as between an organisation and its publics (see Fitzpatrick, 2007; Fitzpatrick et al., 2013; Hayes, 2012; L'Etang, 2009; Signitzer & Coombs, 1992). However, it could be said that there is a lack of studies that link PR with PD in the developing countries, especially in the Arab World (Diab, 2010). Similarly, Hayes (2012) points out that many studies have linked PR with PD in Anglo-Saxon countries; however, there is a need for further research in the developing countries. Furthermore, Signitzer & Coombs (1992) point out that scholars and practitioners of the PR

profession should conduct empirical studies on PD, based on models and theories of PR, in order to facilitate the convergence of the two disciplines:

“Practitioners and researchers will do well to heed the relationship between public relations and public diplomacy. Practitioners should explore what the “other” area has to offer for their work and researchers should test which concepts best transfer between the two areas” (p. 146).

Similarly, Fitzpatrick et al., (2013), Ki, (2015), L’Etang (2009), and Vanc & Fitzpatrick (2016) contend that more empirical studies are needed in order to detect convergences, as well as differences between PR and PD, especially in terms of their role in establishing or promoting relationships between an organisation and its publics. Trying to respond to these calls for anticipating the benefits of intertwined between PR and PD, this chapter strives to present models and theories of PR that could be applied to PD, in order to build or foster relationships between Libya and Italy.

In this chapter, the following topics will be discussed thoroughly: the concept of PR, within a theoretical framework that includes models of public relations, the global theory of PR, and the relational theory of PR. Furthermore, this chapter will discuss the background and concept of PD, its role in relationship-building, and finally, the overlap of the two disciplines.

### **3.2. Public Relations**

The rapid changes and developments within the political, financial and social fields, particularly in the technological domain, play an effective and important role in shortening the distance among individuals (Diab, 2010). In a contemporary world, governmental and non-governmental organisations have sought to find approaches that help them build relationships with their targeted publics (Kirat, 2005). Organisations have strived to establish or promote their relations with national and international organisations, as well as with their citizens/foreign publics, through a communication approach that creates a suitable climate for

building relations to achieve their target (Diab, 2010). The PR profession is considered as an important approach, especially the two-way communication approach that helps organisations to build mutual relations with their strategic publics (Grunig et al., 2002; Nkana, 2017).

### **3.2.1. The Concept of Public Relations**

There is a general agreement in the field of PR that it is not easy to provide a single definition for the concept of PR, as the latter has been defined by many scholars in different fields, such as media, business, political and social sciences, etc. Furthermore, the concept of PR is still rapidly growing (Broom & Tucker, 1989; Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Grunig, 1992; Kirat, 2005; L'Etang, 2008). Some organisations, especially in developing countries, use terms such as 'information', 'publicity', and 'public affairs' as a synonym for PR (Al-Enad, 1990). So, Definitions are substantial because they provide certain paradigms and frameworks (Ferraro, 2015). Harlow (1976) provided a list of about 500 definitions of PR. He defines PR as follows:

Public relations is the distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, acceptance, and cooperation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinion; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and sound and ethical communication techniques as its principal tools (p. 36).

In 1978, the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) defined PR as “the art and social science of analysing trends, predicting their consequences, counselling organizational leaders, and implementing planned programs of action which will serve both the organization and the public interest” (Newsom et al., 2013, p. 3) In addition, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) defines PR profession as a communication tool between institutions and their target publics in order to build mutual relationships (PRSA, Website).

In this study, PR is perceived as a managerial function in Libyan Foreign Ministry, Libyan Embassy in Italy, as well as Italian Embassy in Libya, in order to establish and re-establish

Libyan-Italian ties prior and after the Revolution of 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011. PR practitioners are considered those who manage, plan and execute communication for an institution (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). The PR profession has played a very significant role in the nation-building process of many developing countries (Taylor, 2000). Many studies in Arab countries have emphasised that PR functions have an important role in establishing and re-establishing, or changing relationships between organisations and nations (Abdelhay, 2014; Al-Enad, 1990; Al Ghazali, 1996; Almutairi, 2013; Diab, 2010; Kirat, 2005). PR focuses on ties among governments, as well as between governments and their various publics, in order to create and develop relationships between nations (Taylor & Kent, 1999).

Grunig et al., (2002a) state that PR activities in an institution are significant because they help institutions to achieve their aims, by establishing relationships with strategic publics; “individual communication programs such as media relations, community relations, or customer relations are successful when they affect the cognitions, attitudes, and behaviours of both publics and members of the organization—that is, the cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioural relationships between organizations and their publics” (p. 91). Grunig & Repper (1992) claim that departments of PR contribute to making institutions more efficient, by building long-term relationships with other institutions as well as strategic publics. More specifically, PR departments seek to build mutual relations with its target publics as well other institutions in order to achieve organization's aims. Likewise, Baskin et al., (1997) define PR as a managerial function:

Public relations is a management function that helps achieve organisational objectives, define philosophy, and facilitate organisational change. Public relations practitioners communicate with all relevant internal and external publics to develop positive relationships and to create consistency between organisational goals and societal expectations. Public relations practitioners develop, execute, and evaluate organisational programs that promote the exchange of influence and understanding among an organisation's constituent parts and publics (p. 5).

In the same context, Grunig & Hunt (1984) present a very interesting definition of PR in terms of its role as a managerial function in organisations, by asserting: "public relations is the management of communication between an organisation and its publics" (p. 6).

Accordingly, PR is one of the functions of administration, which seeks to build mutual relations between an institution and its audiences, whether internal or external, as well as among non-governmental institutions. Through the administrative operations of public relations as a management function such as planning, analysis, implementation, organising as well as evaluation (Lages & Simkin, 2003). Based on these definitions it can be observed that:

- The role of PR as a management function.
- PR is also a key element in institutions in terms of its role in managing and planning communication.
- PR seeks, through its activities, to build confidence and mutual benefit between institutions and their audiences, as well as various institutions.

Grunig (1992) emphasises that the main goal of PR is to facilitate cooperation among people, as well as other entities; for instance, institutions publics and societies not only help them to stay close to their customers and employees but also to create a bridge of communication among communities. According to Abdelhay (2014), the main role of PR in institutions is that "management function; relationships between an organisation and its publics; analysis and evaluation through research; management counselling; implementation and execution of planned programmes of action, communication, and evaluation through research, and achievement of goodwill" (p. 67).

In fact, a multiplicity of PR definitions gives researchers the freedom to choose the definition that fits with one's theoretical framework (Abdelhay, 2014). This study, as already mentioned, implements the definition of PR as a management function. Long & Hazleton (1987) emphasise

that PR “a communication function of management through which organisations adapt, alter, or maintain their environment for the purpose of achieving organisational goals” (p. 6).

### **3.3. Theoretical Framework**

#### **3.3.1. Models of Public Relations**

Models of PR have been widely used by different scholars, specialists, as well as researchers since proposed by Grunig & Hunt (1984). These models have been implemented by many organisations in various developed countries, in order to know how PR is practiced as one of the management functions in an institution (Creedon, 1993; Grunig and Grunig, 1992; Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Murphy, 1991). Likewise, PR profession has been applied in both developing countries (e.g, Huang, 2000; Lyra, 1991; Sriramesh, 2002; Van Leuven & Pratt, 1996), as well as many Arabic countries (e.g, Abdelhay, 2014; Al-Enad 1992; Diab, 2010; Saadan, 2009). For example, Diab (2010) utilised these models in his thesis, in order to explore the role of PR occupation in the diplomatic sector of Egypt.

PR Models that were provided by Grunig & Hunt (1984) are one of the main among theoretical frameworks that have been applied in many developed and developing countries alike. In addition, it has been proved that these Models have played a significant role in terms of description and practice of PR in order to build a mutual relation between institutions and their audiences, as well as institutions each other (Mackey, 2003).

Before explaining these models, it should be noted how PR has been practiced by the nature of countries whether developed or developing, meaning to what extent can cultural differences affect the role of PR from one country to another. Sriramesh (1996) argues that PR should be studied in terms of its cultural influence, in order to increase awareness of PR practices. What is more, Culbertson & Chen (1996), Sriramesh & White (1992), and Vercic et al., (1996)



confirmed the importance of studying the impact of the environmental elements, along with the cultural differences, on PR practice. Sriramesh et al., (1999) also tried to link the models of PR with environmental elements, such as culture and political system. Sriramesh & Vercic (2001) argue that PR profession has been globally practiced, in fact, hampered by a relative lack of how it is practiced on the other side of the world, especially, in developing countries. They also argue that plenty of research has been conducted mainly in the US, Europe, and Asia, so more international studies are required in order to go beyond the description of the nature of PR, i.e. to identify the influence of environmental elements on the PR practice of each country.

Sriramesh et al., (1999) emphasise that we “need to expand our knowledge of public relations practices in other parts of the world as well as to link culture with public relations so that we can understand the native's point of view when we observe and practice public relations globally” (p. 285). According to Taylor (2001), it is essential that every assumption that made by scholars in the field of the PR needs to be studied in different countries. He also emphasises that:

“Increased education, cultural sensitivity, and professionalism are the best responses to these challenges. We still have a lot to learn about international public relations. Because public relations has the ability to build relationships, however, it no doubt will serve as an important tool for organisations in the 21st century” (p. 637).

Hence, this study tries to investigate the role of PR and PD in establishing and re-establishing Libyan-Italian ties in light of Libyan environmental variables, such as culture and political system, and how they reflect on the performance of PR and PD. Furthermore, it is important to conduct this study for two reasons: firstly, to ensure that the models of PR and international PR theory are not an ethnocentric theory; secondly, to assess whether different theories and approaches are necessary for each nation or culture.

PR models and theories have been extensively practiced in North America and the United Kingdom (UK); some scholars wonder to what extent PR models and theories applied in developed countries can also be applied in developing countries in order to become universal (Hayes, 2012; Sriramesh, et al., 1999; Tench & Yeomans, 2009). Hayes, (2012) argues that “Public relations will only become a truly global profession when the world’s different philosophies, political systems, and cultures are reflected and incorporated into public relations theory and practice” (p. 31). Similarly, Sriramesh & White (1992) claim that: “To communicate with their publics in a global marketplace, public relations practitioners will have to sensitise themselves to the cultural heterogeneity of their audiences ...The result will be the growth of a culturally richer profession” (p. 611).

Hayes (2012) asks whether the fundamental principles of the PR profession, approaches and theories are equally practiced regardless of the country. Kruckeberg (2000) posits that cultural differences, as well as an environment diversity of social, economic and political in each country, might require different PR models and theories. Similarly, El-Enad (1990) emphasises that not only do environmental elements impact the practice of PR but also dictate some models and philosophies, and might be aims and values of PR in each country. Sriramesh & White (1992) endorse this point when they state that cultural differences from one society to another and from one nation to another lead to an impact on PR practice in those societies. They also conclude that:

“In strong agreement with the advocates of the culture-specific approach and contend that organizations are affected by culture. We draw a relationship between culture and public relations by first linking culture with communication. We argue that the linkages between culture and communication and culture and public relations are parallel because public relations is primarily a communication activity” (p. 609).

Grunig et al., (1995) studied the extent of the practice of PR models in Greece, India and Taiwan, and found that the PR profession, along with the four models of PR, were practiced in

these countries. Moreover, they confirm that these models can be applied in different countries. However, there was lack of knowledge on how to practice PR among PR practitioners. In addition, the study found out two new models of PR- namely the ‘personal influence’ and ‘cultural interpreter’ model. These models will be explained in more detail later in this chapter (see section 3.3.1.2, 1 and 2); and these models have been applied by different studies, especially, in terms PR and PD (Diab, 2010; Hayes, 2012). These two new models are important for this study, given the significance of these approaches in PR and PD alike. In terms of the impact of knowledge of PR practitioners on how PR should be practiced, Grunig (2006) argues that:

“Even though practitioners should have been most likely to practice two-way and symmetrical public relations when the structure was organic, the environment was turbulent, management valued collaboration with publics, and the culture was participative, they did not practice public relations in that way because their knowledge of public relations was limited to one-way methods, publicity, media relations, and marketing support” (p. 156).

Sriramesh et al., (1999) analysed PR practice in three Asian countries, India, Japan, and South Korea, and the press agency/ publicity model was the most used model in these three countries. They found out the PR budget of public institutions in these three Asian countries was much bigger than that of private enterprises, in order to maintain a good relationship with the media and other organisations. The main points of the study in South Korea were replicated by Rhee (1999), who found that “professionals were less involved in strategic management and that symmetrical models had been adapted to fit the culture, with its emphasis on hierarchy” (cited in Hayes, 2012, p. 32). Additionally, another study conducted in Bulgaria by Karadjov et al., (2000) revealed that the one-way model was the most commonly used in this country, while the two-way model was not practiced at all due to lack of knowledge among the PR practitioners. Huang (2000) found out that both the one-way and the two-way models were practiced in Taiwan. In the same context, Petersone (2002) conducted a study about practicing

the profession of PR in Latvia. She pointed out that the one-way model was practiced more than two-way model by PR practitioners in Latvian institutions. The study also concluded that the models and theories of PR can be applied in different countries (cited in Abdelhay, 2014).

In contrast, Holtzhausen & Petersen (2003) conducted an empirical study on PR practitioners in South Africa; they revealed that there was no evidence that PR practice was based on the approach of symmetry or even asymmetry. This means that the symmetrical and asymmetrical communication models cannot be applied in international settings. Implementation of PR activities in South Africa did not reinforce the assumptions of PR models in developed countries. Alternatively, PR practitioners in South Africa established their own models of practice based on environmental variables, such as culture, economy, and politics in their institutions. Similarly, Bardhan's study in India (2003) showed that the practice of PR in Indian institutions is influenced by Indian values of semi-socialism and bureaucracy. Also, she said that the symmetrical communication models might not be used across cultures.

Al-Enad (1990) published an article about the different PR roles and practices in developing countries, and particularly in the Arab world. He believes that the role and functions of PR in Arab nations can be affected by environmental variables; the principles, models, and philosophy of PR are not equally applied in each society or nation, which can ultimately affect the way PR is practiced. Many studies published by different scholars and researchers in Arab countries lend credence to these assumptions, by arguing that the nature of PR has been influenced by the Arab culture (Abdelhay, 2014; Alanazi, 1996; Al-Enad, 1990, 1992; Saleh, 2007).

Al-Enad (1990) emphasises that the PR profession has been applied in different countries in the Arab world, by both governmental institutions and private companies alike. He also argues that the employment of PR in developing countries, especially in the Arab world, preceded the

emergence of elements which dictate the reason of practice PR in developed countries. Al-Enad concluded that:

“Western societies such as developments in technology, the growth of the middle class, improvement in education and growth of the large-scale business, government, and organized labour are not always found in developing countries ... And finally, the mass media are not numerous, and mass communication is not sophisticated enough” (1990, p. 25).

### **3.3.1.1. Grunig and Hunt's (1984) Four Models**

In 1984, Grunig and Hunt identified the four models of PR as one of the most significant stages in the development of the practice of PR. These models explain the different types of communications between institutions and their publics. These models can be divided into two types of communications; firstly, contact unidirectional –press agency and public information models (the information is sent from the sender to the receiver); secondly, bidirectional communication –two-way asymmetrical and symmetrical models (the two-way asymmetrical model works in order to change publics, while the two-way symmetrical model works in order to create a balanced relationship between an institution and its audiences).

#### **3.3.1.1.1. Press Agency/Publicity Model**

The press agency and publicity model appeared in the late 19th century and was designed as a one-way communication, meaning from sender-to-receiver, and the main focus was on publicity and propaganda (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). This model has been applied by institutions in order to influence their publics, as well as persuade them to their policy. It can be said that this model is used to get favourable publicity for institutions. It is the intentional effort to attract public opinion and not necessarily that these audiences need to be specific (Abdelhay, 2014). In other words, organisations seek to influence different audiences.

Generally, the practitioners of the press agency and publicity model use the mass media as a channel for achieving their own goals. In the same line, Abdelhay (2014) claims that

practitioners “do no research aside from monitoring the media in which they sought to place favourable articles about their clients, and pay little attention to the truth or credibility of the news” (p. 69). Furthermore, information that is given by institutions is usually incomplete, distorted or not utterly true. The institution’s goal in this approach is to dominate the publics and the environment in which it operates (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). Grunig et al., (2002b) argue that PR practitioners in this model seek to achieve their organisation’s interest in any way possible.

The model of communication in one direction (one-way approach), in terms of how to apply it in public diplomacy, is referred to information and activities that are published to foreign publics for the purpose of convincing them (Signitzer & Coombs, 1992; Zhang & Swarts, 2009). Tam (2015) claims that one-way PD models seek to “convey favourable information about a nation, but such types of purpose-driven programs are often criticized for only to manipulate public perception” (p. 10). In addition, Show (2009) argues that the one-way model is significant for informing and establishing a case for a country’s position. For instance, after the terrorist attack on Sep 11th, 2001 in the USA, George W. Bush remarked that there was misinterpretation about the USA; the United States had to do a better job in establishing its case, in terms of the relationship with both its people and other nations (Tam, 2015).

#### **3.31.1.2. Public Information Model**

This is a unidirectional model; it can also be said that this model is quite similar to the press agency/publicity model because not one of them pays any attention to the audience responses. The information usually goes in one direction, that of the organisation, to different audiences, in order to inform them of the organisation's policies and then convince them. This kind of PR approach is not seeking, wanting or even expecting any feedback from the audience because the message is sent top-down, from the organisation to its audience (whether internal or external audiences).

Grunig & Hunt (1984) argue that PR practitioners based on this model seek to distribute information in order to persuade publics. It could be distinguished between practitioners in this model and the press agency model, practitioners in public information model seek to preserve and promote the image of their institutions by circulating relevant and meaningful information among targeted audiences (Diab, 2010; Grunig et al., 2002b). Furthermore, Yun (2005) points out that the main role of PR practitioners in this approach is to provide favourable information about their institutions, that is to disseminate information. In other words, they work as “journalists-in-residence”; their aim is to improve the image of the institution, not to volunteer unfavourable information about the institution. In this model, mass media, such as press and news release, newsletters, direct mail and so on, are used to disseminate information to different audiences. Likewise, some research are usually conducted by PR practitioners, however, are normally limited to follow-up reports that published about the institution.

Ivy Lee, otherwise known as "founder of public relations", is one of the pioneers in the field; he claims that information needs to be sent to the audience, in order to inform them of what is happening in an organisation (Cutlip, et al., 2000). He also states that lack of information causes a misunderstanding between the institution and its audiences; based on this assumption, the public information model was established (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). Although the public information model was used in the early 1920s, it was developed and widely applied at the beginning of the twentieth century by governments and some industry organisations when they hired PR specialists to disseminate information about their institutions to the audience. This model is practiced mainly by the government agencies, non-profit institutions, and business and law agencies (Grunig et al., 2002b). Diab (2010), in his research about the role of PR in the diplomatic sector in Egypt, found out that this model was used by many embassies to disseminate information to the Egyptian society and Egyptian Government institutions, in order to influence them.

### **3.3.1.1.3. Two-Way Asymmetric Model**

Unlike the one-way model (press agency/publicity model and public information model), the two-way asymmetric model seeks to receive feedback from the audience. The benefit from this feedback is to help the institution to place their information in a more acceptable way for the audiences that seek to reach them (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). The philosophy of this model is based on the two-way message sent from an organisation to the public, by the same token, from the public to the organisation. The aim of this model coincides with that of an institution, which is to change the public's behaviour in a short period of time. In the same vein, Grunig et al., (2002b) state the messages sent by an organisation to persuade an audience to behave as the institution would want without, however, changing the attitudes and policies of the institution itself. In other words, the term 'asymmetric' was used by Grunig & Hunt (1984) to trace the impact of communication on publics. This means that organisations seek to affect the behaviour of the target audience. For instance, in election campaigns, the two-way asymmetrical model is used by candidates to impact and then persuade the voters to vote for them.

The two-way asymmetrical model is known as 'scientific persuasion approach', which utilises social scientific concepts, in order to influence target publics and then convince them to the organisation's targets (Diab, 2010). The two-way asymmetric model of PR depends mainly on research about the target audience; the attitude surveys and focus groups are usually conducted to identify publics. Notwithstanding the fact that this model is efficient in serving the public interest, the model is utilised to maintain the position of the group in the community. Furthermore, it is used to advocate the audience's view inside the institution and then to inform the institution of what can be accepted or not by the audiences. Grunig et al., (2002b) emphasise that:

With the two-way asymmetrical model, practitioners conduct scientific research to determine how to persuade publics to behave in the way the client organisation wishes. With the two-way asymmetrical model, practitioners use research and dialogue to bring



about symbiotic changes in the idea, attitudes, and behaviours of both the organisation and its publics (p. 308).

#### **3.3.1.1.4. Two-Way Symmetric Model**

The PR profession, as has been defined (a managerial function) in this study and many other studies, seeks to establish mutual relations based on trust between an institution and its audiences, and among institutions themselves. The two-way symmetric model aims to build mutual understanding between an organisation and its audiences, furthermore, unlike the two-way asymmetrical model, targets to change the attitudes and behaviours of the organisation, as much as it seeks to change the attitudes and behaviours of the public. This model strives to contribute into building long-term relationships between institutions and their audiences, by considering the interests of both sides (Diab, 2010; Grunig et al., 2002).

Despite the fact that the two-way symmetric model was proposed in the 1960s, it still remains to this day one of the main theoretical frameworks in PR field. The two-way symmetric model also dominates PR research and has been applied in different developed and developing countries alike (Abdelhay, 2014; Diab, 2010; Grunig and Grunig, 1992; Murphy, 1991; Sriramesh, 2002; Tam, 2015). The two-way symmetric model emphasises on dialogue and communication between an institution and its audience, as well as among institutions themselves, in order to build a climate of mutual understanding. In this model, both sides, either the organisation or the public, might be able to change their behaviour or attitude to reach a point of common understanding between them (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). Lindeborg (1994) states that the two-way symmetrical model “serve as a mechanism by which organisations and publics interact to manage interdependence and conflict for the benefit of all” (p. 9).

The two-way model is used by governmental institutions in order to create mutual understanding with their public; it is also used among governments, in order to maintain mutual

cooperation, benefit, and sometimes even restraint (Diab, 2010; Tam, 2015). In this case, governments should use mass media and also follow the route of a two-way communication with their public, as well as with other governments, in order to enhance relationships, and create trust and mutual understanding (Diab, 2010; Ferraro, 2015). Furthermore, Grunig (1992) claims that there are many reasons why a two-way symmetrical model is the most suitable of all and those reasons are: (1) the information between institutions and their public, as well as among institutions themselves, go in two directions there are no boundaries between them; (2) many issues between institutions and their audience could be resolved through negotiation and dialogue; and (3) the feedback from all publics, including stakeholders, are valued in order to maintain a trusting relationship between organisations and their publics.

With regards to the two-way communication in terms of the possibility of application in PD, this model can be used to increase mutual understanding and benefit, and reduce misunderstanding between nations (Tam, 2015). In the same vein, Zhang & Swarts (2009) assert that the main aim of the two-way communication model is to “promote mutual understanding to facilitate an execution of foreign policy” (p. 382). Likewise, Diab (2010) lends credence of the importance of the two-way communication model in building a relationship, as well as reducing misunderstanding between countries. Similarly, more recently, Vanc & Fitzpatrick (2016), in their study about the “scope and status of public diplomacy research by public relations scholars between 1990 and 2014”, emphasise the importance of the two-way communication model in PD in order to build relationships between nations.

Despite that fact that the four models of PR still dominate the field in many developed and developing countries, these models have been criticized by many scholars and practitioners (e.g. Holtzhausen, 2000; Karlberg, 1996; Leitch and Neilson, 2001; L’Etang & Pieczka, 1996; Motion & Weaver, 2005; Murphy, 1991). Murphy (1991) was the first to criticise the models, by introducing the ‘Game Theory’; she describes the relationship between the PR profession

and its publics, in light of the PR models. In the game theory is that no loser in the game. Symmetrical communication embodies pure-cooperation games between both the institution and its public, where working together is the aim of the game. She also presented the mixed-motive model, adapted from Game Theory. The mixed-motive model integrates elements from the symmetrical and asymmetrical communication models, in order to meet the needs of an organisation and its publics. In the same context, Plowman (2007) claims that:

In mixed motives, each side in a stakeholder relationship retains a strong sense of its own self-interests, yet each is motivated to cooperate to obtain at least some resolution of the conflict. They may be on opposite sides of an issue, but it is in their best interests to cooperate with each other (p. 87).

Holtzhausen (2000), L'Etang & Pieczka (1996), and Motion & Weaver (2005) argue that Grunig and Hunt's symmetry model tends to organisation's interest in favour of the audience, and does not address issues of inequalities in authorities within institutions. They also claim that the symmetry model is unrealistic because PR practitioners have an allegiance to the institutions, not to the public. Leitch & Neilson (2001), and Karlberg (1996) argue that audiences differ from one another, in terms of human and organisational behaviour in each institution. However, the four models of PR by Grunig & Hunt do not pay enough attention to these differences. Leitch & Neilson (2001) assert that "publics are not fixed categories waiting to be identified but rather are constructed and reconstructed through the discourses in which they participate" (p.138). Gower (2006) claims that the impact of globalisation and environmental elements, such as culture, on PR should be taken into consideration, in order to identify the impact of globalisation on PR practice in different countries. This study seeks to explore the role of PR and PD in establishing and re-establishing Libyan-Italian relations in light of Libyan culture. Likewise, in terms of the impact of globalisation, as well as social networks on relationships between an organisation and its publics, Stephen Waddington argues that:

My primary issue with the four models of public relations is the use of a simple construct that seemingly places an organisation or brand at the centre of every diagram, appearing to control communication and relationships. This is not the case in the era of the social web and I would argue never has been (cited in Abdelhay, 2014, p. 39).

In a response to these critiques introduced by critical and postmodern scholars (e.g. Holtzhausen, 2000; Leitch & Neilson, 2001; L'Etang & Pieczka, 1996; Motion & Weaver, 2005), Grunig asserts that the models of PR do not:

Attempt to explain everything in public relations; rather, it is a comprehensive way of thinking that can be used to solve many positive and normative public relations problems... It is not necessary, however, to destroy this edifice to justify the value of another edifice, as critical and postmodern scholars have tried to do (2006, p. 153).

With regards to the symmetrical model, Grunig et al., (2002) emphasise that:

We never have defined the symmetrical model as the accommodation of a public's interest at the expense of the organisation's self-interest. In fact, the concept of symmetry directly implies a balance of the organisation's and the public's interest. Total accommodation of the public's interest would be as asymmetrical as unbridled advocacy of the organisation's interests (p. 314).

### **3.3.1.2. International Models of Public Relations**

The four models of PR have been globally applied, as has been extensively explained in this chapter. However, PR scholars have demanded the need for a global theory or international models that describe the practice of PR profession in “different settings” especially in developing countries. Because, for example, Grunig & Hunt's models have been used to describe the nature of PR in Anglo countries (Grunig, et al., 1995; Sriramesh, 1996; Sriramesh & Vercic, 2001). Therefore, the personal influence model and the cultural interpreter models emerged as a result of the study that Grunig and his colleagues conducted in Greece, India, and Taiwan (Grunig, et al., 1995); these two models are based on conducting PR research at an international level. Abdelhay (2014) and Diab (2010) emphasise that the personal influence and the cultural interpreter models as one of PR techniques that have been applied in cultures

and nations other than the Western world, especially in the Arab countries. Hence, this study seeks to identify the role of these models in building relationships between Libya and Italy in light of Libyan culture.

### **3.3.1.2.1. Personal Influence Model**

The personal influence model was coined by Sriramesh (1992) as the fifth model of PR. According to Sriramesh, this model is a “pervasive public relations technique”, especially in Far Eastern countries (p. 186). In this model, personal communication plays a very important role to persuade and change the public's attitude. For instance, in a study conducted in Greece, in order to identify to what extent PR models are applied in Greek institutions, Lyra (1991) asserted that:

Often what management expects from the public relations department is to develop contacts with important people of the Greek society and political arena and to be good at socializing with them "at their level." Personal contacts are so important that they often constitute a criterion for hiring a public relations person (p. 129).

In the same context, Grunig et al., (1995) and Sriramesh (1992, 2006) argue that practitioners in different institutions that use the personal influence model seek to establish personal contacts with doers players in the media, politics, activist groups, as well as governments, in order to gain attention for their institutions. Furthermore, Taylor & Kent (1999) emphasise that “multiple publics may be an important part of public relations communication in the developed world, but in the developing world, specific publics such as journalists and government officials may actually be more important publics” (p. 134). They also assert that the offices of government in developed and developing countries alike are the key publics, the main target of most PR practitioners, rather than their source. Diab (2010) argues that the personal influence model has been applied by PR practitioners in many institutions in developing nations, in order to get support for their institutions, by building mutual relations with media and

government institutions. Despite the fact that this model has been practiced in many different countries, some research points out that the personal influence model is practiced in an unethical manner (Diab, 2010; Grunig et al., 1995; Huang, 2000).

### **3.3.1.2.2. Cultural Interpreter Model**

In her study about PR practice in Greece, Lyra (1991) found out that the cultural interpreter was practiced by multinational companies that depended on native Greek speakers, in order to understand the country's culture and politics. These kinds of institutions need people that understand the culture, the language, as well as the economic and political environment of the country in which they operate. Grunig et al., (1995) argue that the cultural interpreter model can be applied by institutions and governments in order to build mutual understanding, as well as bilateral relations between institutions and their publics, and also among governments themselves. They also found out that this model is applied by the practitioners of the two-way communication model, either asymmetrical or symmetrical, in order to reach their publics. This model is just a component of other models; it could be fit to institutions that conduct business in another country. Finally, they emphasised that:

Public relations firms with offices in several countries typically hire citizens of those countries to staff the firms. Likewise, multinational corporations hire local citizens for their public relations departments. The United States Information Agency hires local citizens to work with Americans. In the United States, foreign firms hire Americans for public relations work. Foreign governments, embassies, and information agencies hire U.S. public relations firms. Much of this work would seem to fit into the cultural interpreter model (pp. 183-184).

Regards to the cultural interpreter model in terms of how it is applied in PD. Despite the fact that embassies are situated in another country, they are still part of their national government. Embassies are unique institutions that seek to represent the country they belong to, in order to maintain existing relations or build new mutual relations with the country in which they operate (Khakimova, 2013). Furthermore, “A Minister of Public Affairs at the South Korean embassy

in Washington, DC described an embassy as “a microcosm of government” in which the macro level bureaucratic processes in the homeland government exactly manifest themselves” (cited in Yun, 2008, p. 212). Consequently, embassies tend to apply the cultural interpreter model to understand the environment they operate in. Diab (2010) asserts that the cultural interpreter model played a significant role in the embassies that applied this model, as it helped them to understand cultural differences.

### **3.3.2. Global Theory in Public Relations**

Despite the significant role of the PR models and some other theories, such as the excellence theory in developing the PR profession in theory and practice, many scholars have sought to find a theory that can be applied its principles at a global level (Culbertson & Chen, 1996; Grunig et al., 1995; Kruckeberg, 1996; Sriramesh, 1996; Sriramesh & White, 1992). The existing research, especially cross-cultural PR studies in both developed and developing nations, led Grunig and his colleagues to establish a global theory in the field of PR.

Grunig and his colleagues (Vercic, Grunig, L., & Grunig, J. 1996) introduced a global theory called *The Theory of Generic Principles and Specific Applications*. It should be noted that the *Generic Principles* basically include the models of PR and the excellence theory, while the *Specific Applications* are the implementation of PR activities within particular contexts, such as culture, economics, politics, the level of activism, and media (Diab, 2010; Rhee, 2002). More than 300 institutions in the UK, the USA, and Canada were studied by a team of six researchers. The research was funded by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) and was led by Grunig (1992). The main aim of the study was to conduct research on the characteristics of excellent PR sections and departments, in order to reach the international level of the practice of PR (Rhee, 2002).

The Global Theory of PR, as presented by the IABC research team, is a normative theory; it operates between ethnocentrism and cultural relativism approach. In a normative sense, the principles of this theory can be practiced and understood in the same way in different nations across the world; PR departments can help institutions meet their goals. In practice, the PR practitioner should take into account the cultural differences of every nation, in order to effectively practice the generic principles of this theory across cultures (Van Dyke, 2005). In the same context, Khamis & Toth (2008) assert that “this theory offered for the first time a set of generic principles for effective PR practice, applicable anywhere” (p. 32). However, cultural differences, knowledge, as well as support for PR practitioners by senior management are essential in order to practice these principles. The generic principles of the global theory in PR as determined by the IABC research team are as follows:

1. *Involvement of Public Relations in Strategic Management.* PR units help institutions to establish a mutual relation between the institution and its public, either internal or external audience, as well as among institutions themselves, in order to meet the latter’s goals.
2. *Empowerment of Public Relations in the Dominant Coalition or a Direct Reporting Relationship to Senior Management.* PR departments should be an integral part of the senior management of the institution, in order to effectively perform its work.
3. *Integrated Public Relations Function.* PR functions, such as marketing, advertising, publishing and so on, should be integrated into a single department, so that all efforts focus on achieving the goals of the organisation.
4. *Public Relations as a Management Function Separate from Other Functions.* Functions operated by PR departments differ from other departments, such as marketing, human resources, or finance. Thus, sublimation of PR to other departments leads to the dispersion of an organisation’s efforts.



5. *The Role of the Public Relations Practitioner.* Despite the importance of technicians in an organisation for everyday communication activities, PR departments should be headed by a manager that directs PR activities; otherwise, this mission will be performed by other members of the dominant coalition who have no knowledge whatsoever of how to practice the PR profession.
6. *Two-Way Symmetrical Model of Public Relations.* The two-way symmetrical model is based on research and uses communication activities, in order to reach a mutual understanding between institutions and their strategic publics. Some PR departments seek to combine the two-way symmetrical and asymmetrical models in a “mixed motive” model.
7. *A Symmetrical System of Internal Communication.* Excellent institutions enable their employees as "internal public" to participate in decision-making, which helps to increase job satisfaction within the organisation.
8. *Knowledge Potential for Managerial Role and Symmetrical Public Relations.* Excellent institutions should seek to ensure that their PR practitioners have the theoretical and professional knowledge required, in order to effectively practice PR programs.
9. *Diversity Embodied in All Roles.* The principle of diversity is required in excellent PR departments that should integrate both men and women in all roles, and also practitioners with different backgrounds. This is especially important in PR departments because these departments are responsible for the effective communication of the organisation's varied publics.

The generic principles of this theory have been tested by many studies in different countries and these studies found out that the generic principles can be applied at an international level (Diab, 2010; Grunig et al., 1998; Huang, 1997; Kaur, 1997; Khamis & Toth, 2008; Rhee, 2002; Van Dyke, 2005). Therefore, this study aims to discover to what extent these

principles are used by PR practitioners, in order to establish and re-establish Libyan-Italian relations.

### **3.3.3. The Relational Theory of Public Relations**

The concept of the relational approach indicates that the practice of PR goes beyond using the PR profession as a tool of propaganda and persuasion; on the contrary, it aims to build and maintain relationships between institutions and their public (Ki et al., 2015). In 1984, Ferguson introduced the relational approach that shifts the focus of PR from effective communication to the creation of bilateral relations among institutions. Since then, the relational approach has been tested by many scholars and researchers and has proven its role in creating mutually beneficial relationships between institutions and their publics, as well as among organisations themselves (Almutairi, 2013; Botan & Taylor, 2004; Ferraro, 2015; Ki et al., 2015; Ledingham & Bruning, 2000).

The relational approach is used in this study in terms of its role in the relationship-building between Libya and Italy. Cutlip et al., defined PR as “the management function that identifies, establishes, and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the various publics on whom its success or failure depends” (2000, p. 6). By the same token, Grunig et al., (1995) also asserted that PR as a tool of communication is “a strategic management function (that helps) manage relationships with key publics that affect organizational mission, goals and objectives” (p. 85). These definitions emphasise the important role of PR as a managerial function in establishing relationships between institutions and their target public. The PR profession –as management function– is used as a tool of communication to achieve specific goals, such as create relationships between an institution and its publics, negotiate relationships among institutions, or even maintain, establish or change relationships between institutions and their audiences, as well as among institutions themselves (Taylor, 2000). She

also emphasises that “the term relationship is a central concept to a public relations approach to nation building” (p. 183). In the same line, Broom et al., (1997) examined the concept of relationships in the PR field and found out that “many scholars and practitioners say that public relations is all about building and maintaining an organization’s relationships with its publics” (p. 83).

Ledingham (2001, 2003) argued that relationship management has been applied as a general theory of public relations. He also asserted that “there are four pivotal developments which spurred emergence of the relational perspective as a framework for public relations study, teaching, and practice” (2001, p. 286). The four developments can be summarised as following:

1. *Recognition of the Central Role of Relationships in Public Relations.* This point emphasises that the core of the PR is to create relationships between institutions and their audiences, as well as among institutions themselves. This point has been proven by many studies (e.g. Botan & Taylor, 2004; Ferraro, 2015; Grunig, 1992; Taylor, 2000).
2. *Reconceptualizing Public Relations as a Management Function.* PR is one of the management functions that seek to achieve the organisation’s goals, through the four-step management process of analysis, planning, implementation, and evaluation.
3. *Identification of Components and Types of Organization–Public Relationships, their Linkage to Public Attitudes, Perceptions, Knowledge and Behaviour, and Relationship Measurement Strategies.* Scholars have sought to find out the composition of organisation–public relationships and the link of those relationships to awareness perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour.
4. *Construction of Organization–Public Relationship Models that Accommodate Relationship Antecedents, Process, and Consequences.* These include pioneering

models of the organisation–public relationship, such as antecedents, properties, consequences, maintenance, and monitoring strategies.

Accordingly, the relational approach considers that building relationships with target publics and organisations, rather than disseminating information, is the main role of the PR profession, and also one of the best frameworks for PR in public institutions that seek to establish relationships with their stakeholders as well as other institutions (Ferraro, 2015). By using this approach, PR practitioners strive to reach a point of common understanding with their audiences, in order to achieve mutually beneficial results. Thus, communication should be the starting point for building and maintaining relationships among institutions (Swart, 2012).

In their study, "Scope and Status of Public Diplomacy Research by Public Relations Scholars, 1990–2014", Vanc & Fitzpatrick (2016) argue that the relational approach provides a sound framework for examining and understanding PD practices and policies; it also offers opportunities for PR and PD scholars to test the applicability of relational approach in diplomatic contexts. By the same token, Fitzpatrick (2007) asserts that "the relational paradigm challenges practitioners to seriously contemplate 'why they do' public diplomacy and 'why it is worth doing'" (p. 247). Likewise, Khakimova (2013) emphasises that "the relational approach to public diplomacy means establishing relationships beyond personal friendships and trust, focusing on joint projects, and using well-designed long-term initiatives that do not depend on relationships between specific individuals" (p. 37). In a similar context, Riordan (2003) argues that the role of PD has been shifted from communication with foreign people into creating mutually beneficial relationships with them as well as their governments.

Accordingly, since this thesis seeks to examine the roles of PR and PD in building the Libyan-Italian relations, the Grunig and Hunt's (1984) Four PR Models, and the two International

Models, as has been widely explained, have been applied. Furthermore, Relationship Management has been applied as a general theory of PR.

### **3.4. Public Diplomacy**

Historically, PD was used by governments as a tool of international information and propaganda, a kind of top-down communication; in other words, a sort of one-way communication, in order to influence public opinion in other countries. It facilitates foreign policy objectives to achieve national interests, and it also seeks to safeguard the security of a country (Connolly-Ahern, & Ma, 2015; Senaratne, 2016; Tuch, 1990). By using PD, governments seek to change or maintain the attitude and behaviour of foreign governments, as well as their citizens. PD practitioners, such as government leaders, foreign ministers, ambassadors, special envoys, and diplomats, strive to achieve their governments' goals, through the use of communication activities with other governments and their citizens (Deibel & Roberts, 1976). PD has been used as an official channel of communication and dialogue among governments to reach a point of mutual understanding (Sondermann et al., 1979). Sondermann and his colleagues argue that PD is a management process that could help governments to establish long-term relationships with other governments.

Scholars in Arab and Muslim countries argue that the concept of diplomacy was used in the era of Prophet Muhammad 'peace be upon him' 1400 years ago (Barakat, 1985; Diab, 2010; Musbah, 1999; Tufeq, 1986). During that era, the Prophet sent messengers, envoys, and Persian and Roman kings to Arab tribes, in order to spread his message (Islam) and persuade them to enter the Islamic Religion. According to Tufeq (1986), the messengers and envoys were chosen based on the following criteria: he or she has to be familiar with the teachings of Islamic Sharia; he or she has to be intelligent, to have good manners, to be skilful and tactful, and so on. One can argue that in the contemporary time, diplomats are chosen based on these criteria and other.

Hayes (2012) asserts that PD practitioners need to have some skills, such as cultural understanding, historical knowledge, and communications skills, in order to be more effective in building or maintaining long-term relationships with other countries. This is quite similar to the core of the PR profession. However, diplomacy was not recognised as a 'profession' until the Congress of Vienna in 1815 (Hayes, 2012). After World War I (1918), the former president of the USA, Woodrow Wilson, declared a "peace proposal", which in turn helped in the evolution of the diplomacy as a profession (Diab, 2010; Hayes, 2012).

According to Cull (2009), the notion of PD was coined by the Dean of Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, USA, in 1965, when he established the Edward R. Murrow Centre of Public Diplomacy. However, the PD profession was practiced by many countries a long time before this date. As described in the Murrow Centre brochure, PD refers to the role that can be played by PD practitioners (e.g. foreign ministers, ambassadors and so on), in order to influence public opinion in other governments and their people and, thus, achieve national interests for their countries (Cull, 2009). According to Deutsch, there are two types of PD: traditional diplomacy and public diplomacy. Deutsch emphasises that the traditional diplomacy deals with "conducting negotiations between governments" (1996, p. 81). In "*Traditional Diplomacy*", governments seek to deal with other governments. In other words, communications or negotiations among nations are formal, and are usually performed by government leaders, foreign ministers or ambassadors (Ki, 2015). While the other type, "*Public Diplomacy*", refers to the PD in the age of globalisation and development technology, as well as media or cultural diplomacy (Ki, 2015).

Signitzer & Coombs (1992) argue that the concept of diplomacy has shifted from traditional diplomacy towards PD due to the rapid evolution of communication technology, and an impact of public participation on drawing state policy whether the public is internal such as its citizen or external publics that it has common interests with their countries. In fact, PD is practiced

differently from one country to another, based on the foreign policy goals of each country. However, communication technology has united the world and forced the nations to be more connected, in order to build mutual relations, as well as to achieve mutual understanding with other nations (Hayes, 2012; Hiebert 2005).

The terror attacks on 9/11/2001 emphasised the importance of the role of PD in promoting understanding among nations, in order to tackle any problems or to enhance the cooperation among them. For instance, as argued by Schneider “among the many challenges of post 9/11, USA leaders faced the need to gain worldwide public support for a global war on terrorism” (2015, p. 2). In addition, George W. Bush the former president of the USA illustrated that further diplomatic efforts need to be made by the State Department to promote or to change the image of America to its citizens, as well as foreign publics (Hayes, 2012). Moreover, post 9/11 political and governmental leaders have faced many different challenges regarding ideas, information exchange, and political issues; they recognised the need for change (Gregory, 2007). PD has shifted from one-way communication approach "traditional diplomacy" in order to influence an attitude of publics toward an instrument of dialogue, engagement, and attraction "two-way communication, soft power approach" (Lee & Lin, 2015). This is closely related to the concept of PR, as noted previously.

In recent years, Nye (2004) coined the notion of "soft power" in 1990 to describe a nations' power of influence, based on the attraction of culture, social norms, and values or ideas of other nations. Nye (2003) believes that:

Soft power is the ability to get what you want by attracting and persuading others to adopt your goals. It differs from hard power, the ability to use the carrots and sticks of economic and military might to make others follow your will. Both hard and soft power is important in the war on terrorism, but attraction is much cheaper than coercion and an asset that needs to be nourished (cited in Diab, 2010, p. 70).

Unlike the other ways of diplomacy, the approach of "soft power" is based on attractiveness of nation's values, culture, and policies, meaning to build relationship with other nations through cooperation rather than coercion (Golan, 2015). In a similar context, Yun (2012) argues that the contemporary PD has shifted its focus on non-government diplomacy, in terms of its role in building relationships with other nations. In other words, contemporary PD tends to use "soft power" as a key element to establish long-term relationships with nations, as well as to attract foreign/domestic audiences (Golan, 2015).

### **3.4.1. The New Public Diplomacy**

By tracing the evolution of diplomacy, it can be noted that the term of diplomacy has moved from one-way approach towards the approach of negotiations and establishing relationships. Pamment (2015) asserts that the notion of PD has shifted from the narrow sense of influencing attitudes and behaviour of publics to a key player of building relationships and understanding cultures of other nations. Similarly, Kochhar & Molleda (2015) argue that communication becomes the core of the PD process, in order to build or maintain relationships among countries. They also claim that PD seeks to achieve three main objectives: "promoting nation-states' goals and policies, communicating their values and ideals, and developing common understanding and mutual trust among countries and peoples" (p. 53). As argued by Gregory (2007), PD could be used by governments to change or to foster citizens/foreign publics about some issues.

In this study, PD is perceived as a management process that strives to achieve the organisation's objectives, and to build relationships with other organisations. As defined by Tuch, PD is "an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies" (1990, p. 3). Furthermore, PD has played a key role in building relationships among governments. In this regard, Sharp defined PD as "the process by which direct relations are pursued with a country's people to advance the interests and extend the values of those being represented" (2005, p. 106). In addition, PD is



governmental efforts that seek to build a positive image of a country with other nations, as well as with its citizens, by management process of analysis, planning, implementation, and evaluation (McQuail, 2010). Moreover, Gregory asserts that contemporary PD has become a key tool that is used by governments and non-governmental organisations to “understand cultures, attitudes, and behaviour; to build and manage relationships; to influence thoughts and mobilize actions to advance their interests and values” (2011, p. 353). Ki (2015) also asserts that contemporary PD has played an important role in building relationships between institutions or governments and their strategic publics.

These definitions emphasise that PD is used by governments as a management function that seeks to establish or develop relationships with other countries, as well as their publics. On the other hand, it also asserts the close convergence between PR and PD, in terms of the goals that both seek to achieve. In the same context, Pamment (2015) asserts that PD has played a significant role as a communication management in building long-term relationships with other countries, by using the two-way communication approach, dialogue, and engagement. Hopkins (2015) argues that PD is a tool of negotiation and dialogue between governments, and that it seeks to build or extend relations with other nations, in order to achieve governmental objectives. Furthermore, L'Etang (2009) emphasises that the role of PD is not limited to negotiation, in order to influence governments and citizens but it also has a very important role in building relationships between governments.

### **3.4.2. The Role of Public Diplomacy in Relationship-Building**

As described by Thomas L. Friedman, the "world is flat", meaning that communication technologies have united and forced the world to come closer than ever (Gregory, 2007; Ki, 2015). This rapid technological development has fostered the importance of building relationships among nations and organisations, either governmental or non-governmental.

Thus, governments have sought to find an approach that helps them to establish or maintain their relationships with other governments, through cooperation and understanding rather than coercion (Golan, 2015). The concept of relationships, as defined by Ledingham & Bruning, refers to organization-public relationships and is “the state which exists between an organization and its key publics, in which the actions of either can impact the economic, social, cultural or political wellbeing of the other” (1998, p. 62).

PD is used by governmental and non-governmental institutions as a strategic management function to build mutually beneficial relations among nations (Snow, 2015). According to Golan & Yang (2015), PD is management of communication that deals with diplomatic actors, either governmental or non-governmental, through communication and negotiation to achieve their government's objectives. Leonard et al., (2002) state that the main role of PD is “building relationships; understanding the needs of other countries, cultures and peoples; communicating our points of view; correcting misperceptions; looking for areas we can find in common cause” (cited in Snow, 2015, p. 85). Moreover, Fitzpatrick (2007) points out that the linkage between relationship management theories and PD could help to increase practicing and developing the PD profession because the relational approach (as noted earlier) enhances the capacity of nations and non-state actors to build or maintain supportive relationships with their strategic publics that could effect on their foreign policy goals. He also asserts that:

A relational paradigm would have implications for organizational behaviour, as well as public diplomacy theory and practice. For example, a key feature of public diplomacy that is practised under a relational model would be heightened attention to the diplomacy of deeds (p. 209).

PR scholars have identified some dimensions that are used to evaluate the outcomes of long-term relationships between organisations and their publics. In this regard, for instance, Hon and Grunig (1999) provided six elements that could be used to measure the outcomes of long-

term relationships among organisations, as well as their target publics. According to Ki (2015), "these dimensions have proven to be reliable and valid across many studies" (p. 98). Ki also applied these dimensions to the field of PD. The dimensions are as follows:

- *Control Mutuality*. This dimension explains who has the power that influences the decision-making process between the two parties, along with the extent to which both parties contributed in the final decision-making. Hon & Grunig (1999) noted that some imbalance of power is natural.
- *Trust*. As described by Ki (2015), this dimension is a very important element for both PR and PD, in order to build long-term relationships.
- *Satisfaction*. Favourable expectations between the two parties help to build long-term relationships.
- *Commitment*. This dimension indicates the extent to which two parties are linked with each other and also believe that the relationship should be maintained and promoted. As described by Hon and Grunig (1999), there are two dimensions of commitment: the first is *continuance commitment*, which indicates a certain line of action, and the second is *affective commitment*, which refers to an emotional orientation.
- *Exchange Relationship*. In an exchange relationship, benefits are exchanged between two parties.
- *Communal Relationship*. In a communal relationship, both parties seek to benefit each other. In other words, benefit is concern for the other's welfare.

Accordingly, like the PR profession, contemporary PD is considered as an essential tool for governments to establish long-term relationships with other governments, as well as their own citizens (Golan & Yang, 2015). In other words, by using the two-communication approach (e.g. dialogue, engagement and "soft power"), rather than the one-way communication approach

(meaning propaganda), governments seek to build mutually beneficial relations with other governments, in order to achieve their national goal (Golan, 2015). In the same context, Melissen (2005) has asserted the role of the two-way communication approach in establishing mutual relationships with governments and their publics, through the practice of the “soft power” approach as a key element of relationship-building between nations. Most recently, Simjanoska (2017) has argued that negotiation "is one of the basic functions of PD, and it is used to reaching an agreement between the parties that are mutually conflicting (p. 29).

As noted earlier, a great number of PR scholars have proven that relationship-building is the core of the PR profession (Botan & Taylor, 2004; Ferraro, 2015; Ki et al., 2015; Ledingham, 2003). This aim represents one of the convergence points between PR and PD as a managerial function. By the same token, many PD scholars have emphasised that PD has witnessed a notable shift from the influence on governments and their publics towards building relationships with them (Golan, 2015; Musbah, 1999; Nye, 2004; Pamment, 2015; Tuch, 1990). All of the aforementioned scholars have applied the relational approach to the PD profession, in order to evaluate its roles in relationship-building among nations and organisations (Ki, 2015). In the same vein, Snow (2015) asserts that relationship-building is the central goal of PR and PD. In addition, he emphasises the convergence of PR and PD in several aspects, such as relationship-building, management function, communication tool and so on. Both PR and PD seek to build long-term relationships with other organisations, as well as their publics, to achieve mutual benefit.

### **3.5. The Overlap of Public Relations with Public Diplomacy**

In the past, the concept of PD referred to formal communications between governments; in other words, governments used PD as a communication tool to spread information to other governments, while the PR profession was used by organisations and governments, in order to

disseminate information from organisations to their target publics. This means that both PR and PD utilised the one-way communication approach with their publics (Hayes, 2012; Ki, 2015). However, communication technology, globalisation, and the terror attacks of 9/11 have encouraged governments and organisations to build mutually beneficial relations and common understanding among themselves and their citizens/foreign publics, through negotiations and the two-way communication approach, rather than through propaganda tactics or military force (Golan, 2015).

The main focus of this study is the convergence between PR and PD in terms of their roles in relationship-building. Building relationships between an organisation and its public promoted the convergence between PR and PD. In this regard, Fitzpatrick et al., (2013) assert that the link between PR and PD is a “natural process” because the two fields endeavour to build relationships with strategic publics to achieve their organisation’s goals. It is worth mentioning that, as with the PR profession, practicing the PD profession is different from one nation to another, based on the foreign policy of each country, and the impact of environmental elements, such as culture and political system on practicing such a profession (Hayes, 2012; Sriramesh, 1996). For instance, Snow (2015) asserts that practicing PR and PD in the American community differs from their practicing in other countries, in terms of semantic and reputational contexts.

Indeed, PD is not PR, as argued by Fitzpatrick et al., (2013). The latter argue that despite the link between the two, there are also some differences. The former director of the United States Information Agency, Joseph Duffey, declares: “let me say a word about public diplomacy. It is not public relations. It is not flacking for a government agency” (cited in Snow, 2015, p. 79). In this regard, Snow (2015) states that PD is different from PR because “while public relations is still primarily linked to corporate communications and business management models, public diplomacy theory and practice are linked to foreign affairs and the national interest” (p. 79). In

a similar vein, Macnamara (2012) claims that, although there are convergences between PR and PD, there are also significant differences. Fitzpatrick and his colleagues (2013) point out that their research findings did not reveal major differences between PR and PD, as stated by Macnamara (2012).

On the other hand, many studies have proven the convergence between PR and PD (Dodd & Collins, 2017; Fitzpatrick, 2007; Fitzpatrick, et al., 2013; Hayes, 2012; L'Etang, 2009; Signitzer & Coombs, 1992; Signitzer & Wasmer, 2006; Snow, 2015; Vanc & Fitzpatrick, 2016; Yun, 2005). Recently, the review of PD studies from 1990 to 2014 indicated that the two fields share “similar philosophical and practical dimensions” (Vanc & Fitzpatrick, 2016, p. 5). It also showed that theories and models of PR have a great impact on the development of the PD profession. In the same context, Signitzer & Wamser (2006) assert that “public relations can help public diplomacy in developing its scope and in advancing –not only in theory, but also in practice– from one-way information models to more two-way communication models” (p. 454).

According to Hayes (2012), Signitzer & Coombs (1992) were the first researchers to link PR and PD, by asserting that “a relationship between the two areas does exist” (p.145). Many studies have linked the PR and the PD since then. For instance, L'Etang (1996) points out that the two fields have some common functions, such as: (1) they seek to achieve their organisation's objectives, through building relationships with the target publics; (2) they rely on the two-way communication approach to build mutual, bilateral relations with their citizens/foreign publics; and (3) they are used as an advisory function of the governments or institutions that they represent (Jiang, 2015). In addition, L'Etang (2009) claims that PR and PD are applied by organisations in order to establish relationships as well as to achieve mutual understanding with their target publics. Tam (2015) also emphasises on the similarities between the two disciplines because both of them seek to achieve their organisation's goals, through

relationship-building. Furthermore, Melissen (2005) endorsed that “the *modus operandi* of the new public diplomacy is not entirely different from the function of public relations” (p. 2). Contemporary PD seeks to build long-term relationships based on the “soft power” approach, as defined by Nye (2004); according to this, countries strive to establish their relationships with other countries, based on an attractiveness of nation’s values, culture, as well as engagement and dialogue (Golan, 2105). By the same token, PR uses the two-way communication approach, negotiations, and dialogue, in order to reach a point of understanding with its publics (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). This asserts that PR and PD have become intertwined more than ever.

The similarities between PR and PD have encouraged PR scholars to apply the concept of new PD to theories and models of PR, such as the Four Models of PR and Relationship Management (Ki, 2015). Specifically, Kruckeberg & Vujnovic (2005) argue that the practice of “true public diplomacy must rely on communication models of public relations such as two-way symmetrical communication” (as cited in Dayton & Kinsey, 2015, p. 268). In a similar line, Fitzpatrick (2007) argues that Relationship Management Theory (Lindgham, 2003) could help contemporary PD to achieve its government’s goals, as well as to build mutual relations with other governments because the relational approach seeks to build mutual understanding among organisations, as well as between an organisation and its target publics. PR scholars have emphasised that there are similarities not only in terms of theoretical concepts but also in terms of theories and models. For instance, Signitzer & Wamser (2006) applied the four models of PR (proposed by Grunig & Hunt, 1984) to PD. They found out that these models could be utilised in order to solve problems that PD departments may face because PR and PD seek to achieve the same goal. Furthermore, Yun (2005) applied the Excellence Theory to PD. As noted earlier, the Excellence Theory was revised by Grunig and his colleagues (1996), so that PR departments acted more effectively within organisations at an international level; Grunig and his colleagues named the new theory ‘Global Theory in Public Relations’. Yun proved that

the principles of the Excellence Theory, particularly the two-way symmetrical approach, are used by practitioners of PR and PD to help governmental and non-governmental organisations to build or promote mutual relationships among their publics.

PR and PD should be distinguished from propaganda (Hayes, 2012). As noted, relationship-building is one of the aims of PR and PD; they both use the two-way communication approach, dialogue, and negotiation, in order to establish relations among organisations or with target publics. While propaganda is a one-way communication approach used to influence publics rather than establishing a relationship among them. In this regard, Snow (2015) claims that both areas - PR and PD - are always seeking for the public interest for both parties, while the propaganda operates against to the public interest. Moreover, Wilson argues that:

We have achieved, through the impetus of societal change, what we had been unable to achieve through persuasion – a seat at the table, with the strategic managers. We will retain that seat so long as we play to our strengths – long-term relationship building based on the broader (economic) role of the organisation in its communities (2001, p. 526).

Accordingly, it could be said that PR and contemporary PD have many common aspects. For instance:

- Relationship-building is the core of PR profession and contemporary PD as well, in order to build a better relationship with a target public.
- Dialogue, negotiation, and communication, especially, the two-way communication approach in order to build mutual relationships and to reach a point of understanding with their publics.
- Communication technology has increased the importance of relying on PR and contemporary PD.
- They deal with varieties of their target publics.



- They are gaining a significant role in governmental and non-governmental organisations alike.
- They emerged as an important management function in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- They are growing fast in the last few years.

Several studies, as mentioned earlier, assert that the link between PR and PD does exist, especially in terms of their role in relationship-building among governments, as well as between governments and their target publics. In the same vein, Hayes (2012) argues that the overlap between PR and PD has rapidly increased over the last two decades; this has encouraged PR scholars to apply theories of PR to the field of PD. Hayes also claims that there is need to undertake more research that links PR with PD; additionally, the practicing of PR and PD in the era of communication technology needs to be updated and upgraded by scholars in both disciplines alike. This is where this study comes in, in order to provide more evidence regarding the relationship between the two fields.

### **3.6. Conclusion**

The overall goal of this study is to identify the role of PR and PD in building Libyan-Italian relations. In order to achieve this, this chapter has discussed the concept of PR, within a theoretical framework that includes Grunig & Hunt's (1984) four models plus the two international models of PR (the global theory of PR and the relational theory), as a general theory. Furthermore, this chapter has discussed the background and concept of PD, its role in relationship-building, and finally, the overlap of between PD and PR.

Since there is scarce literature on the topic under investigation in Libya and the Arab world in general, this chapter has focused mainly on exploring existing literature in developed and developing countries. Despite the fact that several scholars have criticised the PR models presented by Grunig & Hunt's, it has become clear that these models are still considered as one

of the main theoretical frameworks in the field. With regards to the relational approach and its role in building relationships, many empirical studies have proven its important role in building relationships among governmental and non-governmental organisations as well as with their various publics. In the context of PD, several studies have shown that the concept of diplomacy has shifted from traditional diplomacy to modern PD. In addition, as argued by Golan (2015), the main role of contemporary PD is building relationships. Furthermore, the literature shows that there are many similarities as well as differences between PR and PD.

The next chapter presents the methodology of the research, introducing the research questions and explains the methodological strategy used to provide evidence leading to identifying the role of PR and PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy. So, the relational approach is used as a methodological framework in this study.

## **Chapter 4: Methodology**

### **4.1. Introduction**

In the previous chapter, it was concluded that there is undoubtedly a substantial convergence between PR and PD, especially in terms of their role in relationship-building. The need for building relationships among nations, as well as between nations and their people, reinforces the convergence between PR and PD (see Fitzpatrick et al., 2013; Golan, 2015; L'Etang, 2009; Signitzer & Coombs, 1992). Over the last few years, both disciplines have been using the same methods, such as the two-way communication approach, dialogue, and negotiation, in order to build or maintain relationships with their target publics.

For the purposes of this study, the following sections illustrate the rationale of the methodological approaches that were followed. Data collection is also articulated, namely the semi-structured interviews that were conducted with twenty senior Libyan and Italian diplomats who have practiced both the PR and the PD profession throughout their careers. In addition, the interview process is explained in detail in terms of the following: the strategies that were used by the researcher to reach the targeted participants, the purpose of interviewing senior Libyan and Italian diplomats, and finally the interview-translation method that was followed, since the majority of the interviews were conducted in Arabic. More attention is paid to the process of selecting the sample, where the method of purposive sampling was implemented as the most suitable qualitative approach for this study.

Since the nature of this study is qualitative, seeking to uncover the role of PR and PD in relationship building between Libya and Italy before and post Gaddafi's era, I adopted the relational approach as a methodological framework, due to its appropriateness to studies that seek to find out relationship-building (Almutairi, 2013). Furthermore, the thematic analysis

approach is also discussed as the most suitable data analysis process; its flexibility allows obtaining as much information as possible from the participants. The thematic analysis approach helps researchers extract the feelings, attitudes, and ideas of the participants based on their own experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Finally, the chapter concludes with the ethical considerations adopted in this study.

## **4.2. Research Question**

As argued by Verhagen & Mechelen (2010), the “research question typically begins as general ideas or topic. These ideas may originate from a researcher’s interest, an identified problem, or a recognized gap in current knowledge.” (p. 3). As has been deeply discussed in the literature review, this study links between PR and PD in terms of their roles in relationship building. Its main focus is to identify the role of PR and PD in establishing and re-establishing Libyan-Italian ties before and after the fall of the Gaddafi regime. In order to understand and answer what role have both the PR and the PD played, I formulate the following questions by conducting a three-level analysis, because most of the participants are Libyan diplomats, the questions were translated into Arabic (see Appendix 2).

### **The underlying research question:**

- To what extent have PR and PD helped Libya in building relationships with Italy before and after the fall of the Gaddafi regime?

### **The secondary questions:**

- What problems affected Libya’s relations with Italy before the fall of the Gaddafi regime?
- What strategies has the new Libyan regime used to establish and ameliorate Libya's ties with Italy?

- In light of the Libyan-Italian case, what are the similarities and the differences between PR and PD in terms of their roles in building relationships?

### **4.3. Research Method**

Reviewing the literature has shown the similarities between PR and PD in terms of their roles in building long-term relationships, especially in developed countries. However, it should be noted that most of the existing research in Arab countries, particularly in Libya, have studied the PR profession from its role with other sectors such as education, oil, health, and economy etc., (Al Areshi, 2002; Al Ghazali, 1996; Diab, 2010; Kirat, 2005; Nagem, 2016; Saleh, 2007). Furthermore, in the Arab world, which to my knowledge, there are no studies yet that link the PR and the PD. Consequently, this study is the first that strives to explore the linkage between the two disciplines in terms of their role in relationship-building.

More specifically, this study seeks to identify the extent to which PR and PD have helped Libya to establish and re-establish Libya's ties with Italy before and after the fall of the Gaddafi regime. Due to the lack of studies in Arab nations that have examined the convergence between PR and PD; I have sought to obtain as much information as possible about the phenomenon under investigation, utilizing the qualitative method. The qualitative approach chosen by the researcher fits the theoretical framework and is more appropriate than a quantitative approach in order to address the research questions. This is because, a qualitative approach has been used extensively and successfully especially with unexplored phenomena (Abdelhay, 2014). Moreover, this approach “stresses the importance of context, setting, and the participants’ frame of reference” (Marshall and Rossman, 1999, p. 58).

Thus, the qualitative method is the most appropriate approach, since this study seeks to examine the role of PR and PD in light of the Libyan environment and culture. In this regard, Tewksbury (2009) claims that:

Qualitative data, whether collected from one on one interviews, observations, focus groups or immersion in a setting, provides an understanding of very specific individuals and settings, which while applicable beyond those specific settings and individuals, is limited in how widely generalizable such findings may be. But, overcoming this limitation is the value of learning about something deeply and in a complete context (p. 54).

In a similar vein, Ferraro (2015) asserts that the qualitative approach is the most successful approach when a phenomenon under investigation is not well-understood or well-defined. Unlike quantitative approach, qualitative approach is used in order to provide deep understanding to a matter under investigation; it could also help to translate a phenomenon under investigation from macro level to micro level (Ferraro, 2015). Ritchey et al., (2014) emphasise that a qualitative method is needed when a researcher seeks to obtain information from people who practice a specific role, “specialists”. They also argue that:

“... Qualitative research is needed to provide greater understanding of the nature of an issue or problem, but where measurement of its extent is not at that time of interest” (p. 37).

Accordingly, in this study, the qualitative method is used in order to explore the role that PR and PD have played in building Libyan’s ties with Italy, before and after Gaddafi’s era. It should be mentioned that, in this study, quantitative method is not suitable for this setting because it only allows for a numerical and superficial analysis of the data (Abdelgader, 2012).

#### **4.4. Data Collection**

A qualitative approach is the most appropriate for this kind of research because it allows for the portrayal of a fuller and more complete picture of individual lived experience as opposed to the narrower perspective of quantitative generalization (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Significantly, a phenomenological paradigm most readily allows for an emergent design, which is important in a field where little research has been conducted. So, the absence of studies in the Arab world at large and Libya in particular about the topic under investigation is another reason for employing the qualitative approach.

In this study, the interview is the key qualitative tool for data collection. The interview as a qualitative method has been widely applied in media studies and social research alike, and it has been proven that it is used especially when there is lack of information about the subject under investigation (Abdelgader, 2012; Abdelhay, 2014; Almutairi, 2013; Diab, 2010; Ferraro, 2015). In this regard, Rubin & Rubin (2005) posit the interview approach allows us “to see that which is not ordinarily on view and examine that which is looked at but seldom seen” (cited in Myers & Newman, 2007, p. 3). Similarly, Daymon & Holloway (2002) state that the value of this approach is its flexibility and also allows participants to answer questions based on their own perspective.

Using the interview as a data collection tool allows me to obtain first-hand information about the role of PR and PD in relationship-building between Libya and Italy. In order to collect the data, I travelled to three different countries: Libya, Egypt, and Italy. In total, I conducted twenty interviews. More specifically, I first conducted four interviews at the headquarters of Libyan Prime Ministry and Foreign Ministry in Tripoli. This group of participants included current and former Libyan Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers. Secondly, I conducted four interviews at the headquarters of the Libyan Embassy in Rome and Italian Foreign Ministry. Thirdly, I conducted three interviews with former Libyan diplomats who were working in Egypt at the time of data collection. Fourthly, I interviewed four Libyans diplomats in their homes based in Libya. Finally, I interviewed the five remaining participants over skype. The data were collected from August to November 2016. The length of the interviews ranged between one and two hours. I collected, transcribed, and analysed this data within approximately four months.

#### **4.4.1. Semi-Structured Interviews**

In this study, semi-structured interviews were chosen as a qualitative method to collect the data from all the targeted participants. Interviews are divided into three categories: structured

interviews, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured interviews (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Structured interviews are a useful approach because they prevent researcher's bias. However, they do not give interviewees the freedom to provide more details due to the fact that the questions are pre-determined by the researcher (Minichiello et al., 1990).

According to Corbetta (2003), the structured interview is a closed approach: "the same questions with the same wording and in the same sequence" (p. 269). Despite the fact that the questions in semi-structured interviews are formulated in advance, this kind of approach allows researchers to clarify the interviewees' responses during the interview, as well as to probe for further explanations (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Furthermore, semi-structured interviews have an explorative nature, meaning that during the interview the researcher has the key role to guide and keep all participants on the topic under investigation -hence reduce the drop rate, which could be the result of unstructured interviews (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). In unstructured interviews, there are no pre-determined questions. The researcher usually starts with a general idea in the area of the study under investigation and the interview unfolds within this area (Daymon & Holloway, 2002; Kvale, 2008). Furthermore, the unstructured interviews do not guarantee that all of the data that you will collect answers your research questions, due to lack of questions in this kind of approach and, hence, control (Minichiello et al., 1990). Each type of interviews is used by qualitative researchers based on its appropriateness (Daymon & Holloway, 2002). Semi-structured interviews are used in this study for several reasons:

1. To help me unveil themes and ideas that have not been considered yet by researchers in the Arab countries, which this study is the first that strives to combine PR and PD in order to identify their roles in establishing relationships between Libya and Italy;



2. To offer flexibility to participants and provide additional information about the phenomenon under investigation.
3. It encourages participants to engage freely with the topic because all participants are given freedom to answer questions based on their ideas and perspectives and;
4. To help me to clarify and explain some ambiguous questions to the participants during the interview.

In order to obtain as much information as possible about the topic under investigations, the questions used in this study are guided by the following elements:

- A. Questions that represent the main core of this study;
- B. The follow-up questions that help to unveil significant issues about the phenomenon being studied and;
- C. Probing questions (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Since this topic has not been previously investigated in the Arab world, potential themes elements that might contribute to building mutual relations between Libya and Italy were performed and formulated in the interview questions guide (see Appendix1). The rationale behind this was to help me obtain as much relevant information as possible from the participants about the topic being studied.

It should be mentioned that all interviews are designed according to ideas and themes around the main core of this study, which is a relational approach. Since this study looks at the field of building relationships, the relational approach, as previously explained, is more appropriate and valuable than any other approach. One of the key roles of the PR and the PD is building, re-building or maintaining relationships among organisations and their publics, as well as among institutions. Employing in-depth interviews as a qualitative data collection tool in this

study allowed me to obtain information related to the topic under investigation. In this regard, Marshall & Rossman (1999) assert that the strength of this approach, when combined with others, “in-depth interviewing may be the overall strategy or one of several methods employed in a study” (p. 80).

#### **4.4.2. Interview Process**

At this stage, I have played the role of interviewer with all of the participants. The questions, as previously noted, were designed by Rubin & Rubin, (1995). The latter argue that interviewers need to have some skills in order to understand participant's perspectives and to explain some unclear points during the interview. In this regard, I have conducted many interviews during my career in the field of higher education as an assistant lecturer in Libya. In this study, twenty participants were interviewed, whereas most of the interviews were conducted in Arabic due to the fact that the majority of the targeted participants were Libyan diplomats; solely two interviews were conducted in English.

As argued by Lilleker (2003), preparation is one of the key elements required especially when researchers seek to interview ‘high calibre’ participants. This study deals with diplomatic elites, which are most of the times are busy due to their responsibilities. Therefore, in order to ensure that all participants would be interviewed, I started contacting them two months prior to data collection through the following tactics:

1. Collecting names of the targeted diplomats through the Libyan Foreign Ministry. I used personal contact with some of the diplomats, in order to get their consent. In addition, I used snowball sampling which some diplomats helped me by connecting me to other diplomats. Furthermore, I used phone calls and emails, as well as informal face-to-face meetings, so that the participants were familiarised with me and the study itself.

2. Contacting all targeted participants through the Libyan Foreign Ministry, Libyan Embassy in Rome, and Libyan Embassy in London, which sent a confirmation letter to all participants (see Appendix 5). The letter showed the name of the researcher and the purpose of the study, while the diplomats were also asked to contribute in the study;
3. An abstract of the study that included the title, the aims, the research questions, as well as the consent form was sent to the participants, in order to inform them about the study and ensure their approval (see Appendices 3 & 4).
4. Finally, interviews were scheduled.

Due to the fact that this study is the first one in the Arab world that endeavours to identify the role of the PR and the PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy in light of the Libyan culture, it is very crucial that the interviews provided as much information and explanations as possible. Thus, the interview questions guide comprises of the following three main topics about the core of the study: 1) PR during and after Gaddafi's era, 2) PD during and after Gaddafi's era, and 3) PR and PD in terms of their roles in building relationships between Libya and Italy, either before or after Gaddafi's era (see Appendix 1). Finally, the interview questions guide contains introductory topics, such as background information and personal experiences, which include for example: take me back through the history in your career that brought you to the diplomatic corps; could you describe the diplomacy environment/conditions when you first started? How different is today; how easy is your position presently; It was easier in the past? Why? etc.

I used semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions as a qualitative approach, in order to collect as much information as possible from all diplomats. Aberbach & Rockman (2002) state that open-ended questions are a very suitable technique, especially when researchers deal with 'high calibre' participants. This technique encourages participants to engage with me, by

answering questions in an effective and productive way. Unlike closed-ended questions, the open-ended interviewing technique is a preferable approach to conducting interviews with elites (Harvey, 2011). In this respect, Aberbach and Rockman (2002) claim that elites do not prefer closed and pre-determined questions because this kind of approach does not allow them to express their views. Thus, the rationale behind applying the open-ended interviewing technique is to ensure an open response allowing participants to be as open as possible during the interview. Despite the fact that there are no similar studies in the Arab world, I tried to benefit from some previous studies in developed and developing countries such as (Abdelhay, 2014; Almutairi, 2013; Diab, 2010; Hayes, 2012; Ki, 2015).

I interviewed 20 participants in total. It is important to note, that I initially planned to interview 25 participants. However, one Libyan diplomat did not answer any calls, three interviewees were excluded for health issues, and one Italian diplomat kindly refused to participate in the study. The Italian diplomat noted that she felt that the rest of the participants would provide all the necessary information. 18 interviews were recorded and transcribed in Arabic and later translated into English. I recorded and transcribed the other two interviews in English.

#### **4.4.3. The Purpose of Interviewing Libyan and Italian Diplomats**

Since this study aims to uncover the role of PR and PD in relationship-building between Libya and Italy, I was eager to interview people who have practiced PR and PD at the same time, in order to understand this role at the time of its practice. Thus, twenty diplomats were interviewed; these diplomats were Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers, and Ambassadors. Conducting interviews with diplomatic elite is very important, and it requires a thorough knowledge of the topic that is being studied (Smith, 2006; Stephens, 2007). These diplomats were chosen due to their experience and knowledge on the topic being studied. Furthermore, all diplomats interviewed in this study have practiced PR and PD under some position: Prime Minister, Foreign Minister or Ambassador.

Despite the fact that there is no general agreement on the definition of 'elite', however, it could be said that the concept refers to people who have a special social standing and privilege when compared to others (Almutairi, 2013). As argued by Harvey (2011), the types of elites could be divided into three categories: the term 'ultra elite' refers to someone who has power and authority within a society or even within a group that is considered elite, while the term 'professional elites' describes employees who are particularly skilled or competent in their professions. Lastly, the term 'hybrid elites' refers to informal elites, meaning the invisible and fragmented elites. Hence, the term 'elite' used in this study refers to all diplomats due to the power and the unique social standing that they gained from their positions.

In recent years, conducting interviews with the elite has become the focus of attention for many scholars in various disciplines, such as media studies, and social and political sciences (Harvey, 2011). In this regard, Cohen (1983) asserts that researchers should interview those who on the top of the pyramid in communities or institutions, especially if they wish to study the nature of societies in terms of political, economic and cultural aspects. In the same token, Marshall & Rossman emphasise (2006) that it is useful to interview elite groups because the valuable information that might be gained from this kind of people because of the nature of their positions they hold in political, economic and cultural fields. However, I faced many difficulties during fieldwork. The disparity in the centres of power between me and the participants, along with accessibility, is one of the disadvantages of conducting interviews with diplomats. Similarly, Marshall & Rossman (2006) endorse that one of the dilemmas that face researcher during the fieldwork process is how to get access to elites because they are always busy, and it is not easy to contact them initially. However, different strategies and tactics were adopted, in order to ensure that all potential participants would be interviewed.

#### **4.4.4. Text Translation Method**

Due to lack of information about the Libyan society in the English language (see chapter 2), I translated some theses, books, articles, as well as government documentation from Arabic to English, through the following stages:

1. Choice of related texts by reading them before employing them in the study;
2. Translation of Arabic texts: after identifying the related texts, I translated them from Arabic to English through the following steps: i) Understanding the concepts in Arabic and then translating; ii) Producing drafts of the texts in an academic style in English, iii) More attention had been paid to the grammar and spelling then, and
3. Revision of translation in order to ensure that the main concepts of the original texts have been transferred into the translated texts.

It is worth referring not only to the cultural differences between Western and Eastern countries, but also among the Arab nations themselves; there are some terminologies used in the Libyan society that are not used in other societies such as “Regional or Tribal” especially in terms of their effect of the diplomatic performance in Libya. Some of the participants used these terms during the interviews. So, I tried to translate and explain all these terminologies based on their appropriateness to the context of the study. Therefore, I did not use a "literal translation method" with all the texts as it is difficult to translate every word in a text (Moinjide, 2006). In addition, literal translation might have an impact on the main meanings and ideas, while non-literal translation helps to get the message across as intended by the interviewee.

After the process of translating the related texts to this study, because I used some theses, books, articles etc., which are written in Arabic, I cited all names of the authors and the sources in the reference list, after being translated into English.

#### **4.4.5. Interview Translation Method**

Despite the fact that all of the Libyan diplomats who participated in this study speak both Arabic and English, I decided to conduct all of the interviews in Arabic - except two conducted with the Italian diplomats - in order to obtain as much information as possible. Conducting the interviews in the participants' native language allows for a real interaction between me and the participant and helps maintain the richness of the data, a goal that is unlikely to be achieved by a non-native speaker. According to (Griffie) 2012, who states that people can understand and participate with us more effectively especially when we deal with them in their own language. However, one can argue that given that the researcher is emotionally attached to the topic of the thesis as a native of Libya, this could compromise his neutrality, and by extension the validity of the findings. In this respect, it is necessary to clarify that the findings of this study are not simply transferred from one 'embeddedness' to another (see further Melossi et al., 2011). The 'cultural trip' of the findings of this thesis problematizes with the ways in which findings have been transformed in the process of moving cultures and between contexts (Melossi et al., 2011). More specifically, according to Sozzo (2011), discourses that travel from 'there' to 'here', undergo some kind of alteration, and also the researcher has to adapt to local problems and vocabularies in order to preserve certain cultural and historical elements (in Melossi et al., 2011).

Accordingly, I had to translate the research questions guide from English to Arabic (see Appendix 2). After collecting all of the data, I translated it to English, through the non-literal translation method. The data are analysed in English in order to obtain the results of this study.

#### **4.4.6. The Reflection of the Revolution of February 17, 2011 on the Research**

For this study, the data were collected five years after the beginning of the Libyan revolution in 2011. When I started my PhD in 2014, I was anxious about the aftermaths of the revolution on the study; this study was aimed at building or maintaining the relationships between Libya

and Italy, which requires political and economic stability. The political stage of Libya has witnessed various changes since 2011. All successive Libyan governments after 2011 have sought to build relations with other countries based on mutual respect and common interests. Indeed, the Libyan revolution had both a positive and a negative impact on this study. The advantages are as follows:

1. If this study had taken place during Gaddafi's time, it would have been based on his philosophy that derived from 'The Green Book'. Thus, the study would either never take place or, in case it did, it would not be original, due to the rules of Gaddafi regime which I would have to comply to them.
2. Freedom: the revolution allowed all participants to express their views freely, which is clearly can be seen in chapters 5, 6.
3. After the revolution, Libya entered a new era of relationships. All Libyan governments sought to build and rebuild their relations with many countries, especially Italy, because Italian state last ten years become one of the most Western countries that have special relationships with Libya.
4. The Libyan governments have sought to rebuild Libya's institutions, particularly those of the higher education; this change gave me the opportunity to carry out this study.

On the other hand, one of the most negative points after 2011 was the political and economic instability in Libya, which had an impact on this study. For instance, after 2011, the Libyan state witnessed more than three governments because of the revolution; the country was still in the process of rebuilding its institutions. Similarly, The Italian Republic also witnessed the change of more than three governments, along with the referendum on constitutional reforms in late 2016, which forced Prime Minister, Matteo Renzi, to resign. In this respect, for instance, one of the participants said, in spite of the political instability in both countries, Libyan-Italian



ties were, still and remained good due to the common interests between the two countries (more details in chapters 5 and 6).

Indeed, I faced the following difficulties during the study:

1. The lack of past studies referring to this topic in Libya and the Arab world alike.
2. The need to translate theses, books and articles from Arabic and English due to lack of studies about the Libyan society in the English language.
3. Expenses and financial support due to several journeys to three different countries Libya, Egypt and Italy, in order to interview targeted participants.

#### **4.5. Research Sample**

Most researchers in social sciences and humanities alike collect data from a population, whether that population is people, brands, or institutions (Daymon & Holloway, 2002). The latter two argue that it is not possible to collect data from everyone linked to the topic of study, since researchers may not have the time, effort, or resources. Furthermore, Neuman & Kreuger (2003) claim qualitative sampling techniques are based on the subject and the aim of the study, as well as to what extent these serve the purpose of the study. In the same vein, according to Flick (1998), sampling techniques are also determined by the “relevance to the research topic rather than their representativeness which determines the way in which the people to be studied are selected” (cited in Neuman, 2010, p. 241). What’s more, researchers need to choose their sample very carefully because “a good sampling frame is crucial for accurate sampling” (Neuman, 2010, p. 246). Thus, for this study, a purposive sampling technique is used due to its appropriateness with the topic under investigation. The participants were selected based on their:

- Professional experience
- Privileged knowledge on the subject of study.

#### **4.5.1. Purposive Sample**

Since this topic has not been studied yet in Libya and Arab countries alike, it was very important to select the right people in order to provide as much information as possible on this topic. Moreover, due to its qualitative nature, this study provides comparisons, as well as diversities, among the participants' views rather than just generate a representative sample, to achieve the purpose of the study. In this regard, Hayes (2012) argues that identifying participants who are able to provide comprehensive and rich information is one of the key elements to be considered by researchers. According to Neuman, the purposive sample aims to "identify particular types of cases for in-depth investigation to gain a deeper understanding of types" (2010, p. 268). In addition, Denscombe (2014) asserts that the purposive sample in a qualitative research seeks to obtain information and explanation based on the participants' knowledge and expertise. Unlike some other kinds of sampling approaches, such as random and systematic sampling, a purposive sampling technique provides valuable data that are consistent with the topic studied (Maxfield & Babbie, 2014).

The relational approach followed in this study requires in-depth investigation of the role of both the PR and the PD in relationship building between Libya and Italy. Thus, a purposive sample of twenty Libyan and Italian diplomats was selected. These diplomats have practiced both PR and PD. All ambassadors selected have represented Libya in Italy and vice versa. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were used with all twenty participants. Finally, Daymon & Holloway (2002) argue that pilot studies in qualitative research are not always necessary; however, I conducted one pilot study, in order to avoid ambiguity and misunderstandings between me and the participants.

#### **4.5.2. Sample Size**

One of the challenges many researchers face in a qualitative research is the sample size and the compromise of external validity, especially if theoretical saturation occurs (Bryman, 2016). Identifying the number of participants for purposive sampling as a qualitative method is one of the key elements that should be considered by researchers (Hayes, 2012). One could argue that there is no general agreement among researchers about the appropriate sample size in a qualitative research. For instance, as argued by (Neuman, 2010) that determining a validity of a study in a qualitative research cannot be achieved by sample size whether the size of the sample is big or small. In this regard, Patton asserts that “the validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the observational/ analytical capabilities of the researcher than with sample size” (2002, p. 245).

As an appropriate indication, Creswell (2003) and Groenewald (2004) support that, two to ten participants are an appropriate sample size for a qualitative study; while Leedy & Ormrod (2005) state that five to twenty-five participants are a sufficient sample size in qualitative research.

According to Patton (2002), the quality and richness of information in qualitative research is more important than the quantity and volume of the sample for the following reasons:

1. Rising the sample size beyond "saturation point" does not necessarily influence research validity because “there will come a point where very little evidence is obtained” (Patton, 2002, p. 83).
2. Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research does not aim to generalize results.
3. In qualitative studies, researchers are required to determine the size and type of the sample in order to be able to manage the data.

Along these lines, Franco (2009) stated that:

If the researcher desires depth, he or she would interview a relatively small number of participants while spending considerable time to understand an experience or phenomenon as thoroughly as possible. When breadth is the concern, less time is spent with each participant in exchange for studying a large number of participants" (p. 38).

Accordingly, the sample size of this study was determined by the saturation point. There is no exact number of participants that should be interviewed, in order to obtain the necessary data. For instance, Guest et al. (2006) conducted interviews with sixty women in two West African countries but they reached data saturation within the first twelve interviews (cited in Bryman, 2016). The saturation point of this study was reached when the researcher realised that the topic being studied was ultimately exhausted and participants provided no further explanations or ideas during the interviews. In this regard, Bryman (2016) argues that there is no need to specify the minima or maxima for sample sizes, especially, if the saturation point is considered to be the criterion for a sample size. In the same context, Tuckett endorses this point when he asserts that the purpose of qualitative studies is "not the amount of data but rather the richness of the data, not the total counts but the detailed descriptions" (2004, p. 56).

Thus, a good way of detecting the saturation point and, avoiding to collect too much data is for researchers to work through the data while collecting them. A lot of time and effort can be saved this way. This study seeks to obtain the richness of the data rather than the amount of the data. I tried to obtain as much information as possible through applying the relational approach and thematic analysis approach, by covering all the aspects of the topic under investigation. Hence, twenty diplomats were interviewed; I spent more than thirty hours discussing with the participants, in order to identify the role of both the PR and the PD in building or maintaining relationships between Libya and Italy.

#### **4.6. The Relational Approach of Public Relations and Public Diplomacy**

The PR profession has been linked to some other disciplines, such as business, politics and social sciences. Specifically, in the last few years, the attention of PR scholars has turned to the application of models and theories of PR to PD (Hayes, 2012; Ki, 2015; Signitzer & Coombs, 1992). It is worth mentioning that PR scholars have studied the following models and theories of PR (Toth, 1992, cited in Almutairi, 2013):

- **Rhetorical & Critical:** Toth (1992) argues that the PR profession could be divided into systems, rhetorical, critical. These three categories should be combined together in order to enrich the theory and practice of the PR profession.
- **Organisation and Management:** Many studies in developed and developing countries have proven that PR is a managerial function that seeks to achieve the objectives of the organization (Abdelhay, 2014; Almutairi, 2013; Baskin et al., 1997; Harlow, 1976; Lages & Simkin, 2003).
- **Functionalist:** the core of PR is to build relationships (Broom et al., 1997; Grunig et al., 1995; and Taylor, 2000).

In this study, PR and PD have been linked together because both of them are considered to be a fundamental tool in relationship-building (see Signitzer & Coombs, 1992; Signitzer & Wasmer, 2006; Snow, 2015). They have been used in developed and developing countries alike in building or enhancing mutual relations between organisations and their publics or among organisations themselves (Hayes, 2012; Ki, 2015). The research questions are designed based on the relational approach, meaning what the role of PR and PD in establishing and re-establishing Libya's ties with Italy before and after Gaddafi's era is based on the participants' views.

The notion of the relational approach was introduced in 1984 by Ferguson. The latter argues that the philosophy of relational approach is about building or maintaining relationships, and that these relationships should be built based on negotiation, dialogue, the two-way communications model, as well as understanding other cultures rather than using propaganda, the one-way communication model or coercion (military force). Scholars have studied the relational approach in terms of its role in building relationships, and they proved that the relational approach is used in order to establish or maintain mutually beneficial relations (Almutairi, 2013; Botan & Taylor, 2004; Ferraro, 2015; Ki et al., 2015; Ledingham & Bruning, 2000).

PR scholars have also asserted that the main role of the PR profession is to build or maintain relationships. For instance, Cutlip et al. defined PR as “the management function that identifies, establishes, and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the various publics on whom its success or failure depends” (2000, p. 6). Likewise, Grunig et al. (1995) emphasise that PR as a management tool seeks to create mutually beneficial relationships between institutions and their target audiences, in order to achieve the institution's goals. This means that PR as an important management function has been used by governmental and non-governmental institutions alike, in order to achieve the institutions' objectives through effective communication, such as negotiation and dialogue, rather than through a coercion approach (propaganda, one-way communication). In the same context, Broom et al. (1997) and Taylor (2000) also asserts that the core of PR is to build relationships.

Furthermore, the relational approach has also been applied in the field of PD. In the last few years, the concept of PD has been shifted from one-way communication to two-way communication. In other words, PD is used to build and maintain relationships, by using the concept of soft power as described by Nye (Ki et al., 2015; Riordan, 2003). Regarding the role of relational approach in the PD field, Fitzpatrick asserts:

A relational paradigm would have implications for organizational behaviour, as well as public diplomacy theory and practice. For example, a key feature of public diplomacy that is practised under a relational model would be heightened attention to the diplomacy of deeds (2007, p. 209).

As a result of technological development, PD has become one of the tools that governments use to build long-term relationships with other nations. In this respect, Tuch (1990) presents one of the most important definitions that emphasises on the role of PD in relationship-building: PD is “an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation’s ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies” (p. 3).

Despite the fact that the relational approach could be considered as a quantitative approach, especially when it tracks relationship changes over time (Bruning & Ledingham, 1998), the qualitative method is considered as the best way to conduct research in the field of relationship-building (Almutairi, 2013). In the same regard, Jahansoozi (2007) asserts that the qualitative method is considered to be the most suitable approach, especially if researchers seek to evaluate how relationships are perceived between nations or institutions one another, because it provides rich details, as well as a holistic view of those relationships. Furthermore, the relational approach has been applied as a qualitative approach and has proved its validity in providing rich information on the topic being studied. For instance, Almutairi (2013) applied the relational approach as a qualitative method to explore the relationship within the police community of Kuwait through in-depth interviews. Ki (2015) also applied the relational method in order to explore the convergence of relational ties between PR and PD, in terms of relationship management. What’s more, Ni (2007) applied the relational perspective to examine the relationship between managers and employees in organisations, by using in-depth interviews as a qualitative method for data collection. Thus, for this study, the relational approach is used as a methodological framework, in order to identify the role of PR and PD in

long-term relationship-building between Libya and Italy; for this purpose, twenty diplomats were interviewed.

#### **4.7. Data analysis**

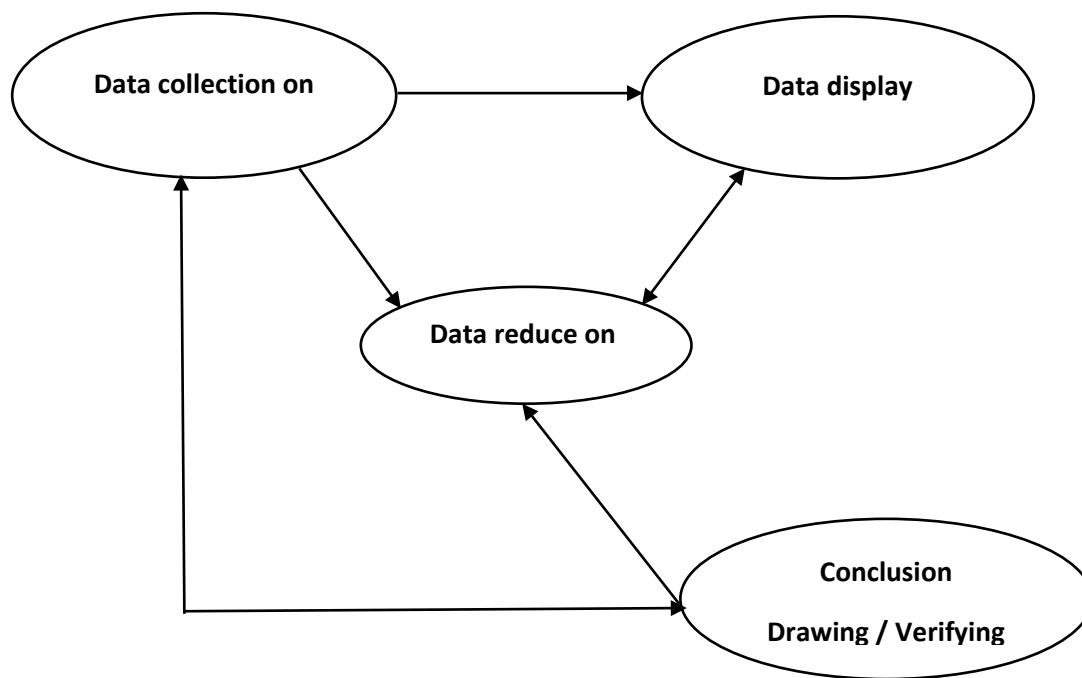
As noted earlier in this chapter, the semi-structured interviews are considered to be the most appropriate approach for the phenomenon being studied because they contribute in obtaining deep and elaborate responses by the targeted participants. However, before discussing the thematic analysis any further, it should be mentioned that the general approach is also used in this study in order to analyse the data. The following sections explain in detail the stages that were followed for data analysis.

##### **4.7.1. General Approach**

For this study, the general approach "flow model" is utilized, as proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The philosophy of this approach is based on data reduction, data display, on drawing conclusions and, finally, on the verification of all the data. Data reduction allows researchers to manage and understand the data, through writing summaries, coding, testing out themes, making clusters, making partitions, and writing memos; the data reduction process continues until a final report is produced (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 10). Data display is "an organised, compressed, assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action" (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 11). At this stage, researchers use several display techniques, such as figures, quotations, and narrative text, in order to identify differences and similarities themes in the data (Alhojailan, 2012). In the final stage of the data analysis process, conclusions are drawn after evaluating the findings (Alhojailan, 2012; Almutairi, 2013). The following figure 4.1 shows the process of the general approach



Figure 4.1: Component of Data Analysis: General Approach "Flow Model".



Source: (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 11).

#### 4.7.2. Thematic Analysis

There is no general agreement on a specific definition of the thematic analysis or as to how it should be conducted (Boyatzis, 1998). However, the thematic analysis has been extensively applied by many scholars in various disciplines, such as media, sociology, criminology and psychology (Alhojailan, 2012; Almutairi, 2013; Boyatzis, 1998; Braun and Clarke, 2006). The thematic analysis approach is used by many researchers as a method of qualitative data analysis because:

Thematic moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas. Codes developed for ideas or themes are then applied or linked to raw data as summary markers for later analysis, which may include comparing the relative frequencies of themes or topics within a data set, looking for code co-occurrence, or graphically displaying code relationships (Namey et al. 2008, p, 138).

Qualitative research seeks to obtain as much information as possible about diverse aspects of a topic under investigation (Ferraro, 2015). A thematic analysis approach could be applied in

different disciplines of qualitative research regardless ontology or epistemology; it also focuses on several patterns (themes) of attitude and behaviour (Miller & Crabtree, 1992). In this regard, Alhojailan (2012) argues that the thematic analysis as a type of qualitative analysis is considered to be the most appropriate approach for studies that seek to obtain information in great detail. Furthermore, Braun & Clarke (2006) argue that the thematic analysis is an approach that helps researchers to identify, analyse and report themes within their data. Accordingly, the thematic analysis is chosen as the qualitative approach for the data analysis of this study for several reasons:

1. Since this study seeks to identify the role of PR and PD in relationship-building between Libya and Italy based on the participants' perspective, the thematic analysis is considered to be an appropriate approach for this study. According to Alhojailan (2012), the thematic analysis aims to understand the actual practices of individuals based on their experience as well as their perspective.
2. The thematic analysis approach offers flexibility, as it can be applied in different fields of qualitative research, regardless of the ontology or epistemology (Braun & Clarke, 2006; and Miller & Crabtree, 1992).
3. In the thematic analysis process, the data is analysed without engaging any pre-existing patterns. This approach can also be applied to studies that rely on participants' ideas and attitudes (Alhojailan, 2012; Boyatzis, 1998).
4. Thematic analysis provides rich and detailed data of the topic under investigation (Alhojailan, 2012).
5. It presents similarities and differences on what participants think which helps the researcher to obtain a global view of the topic (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

6. It gives the opportunity to researchers to find out the relationships between themes and ideas and then compare them with participants' perspectives (Alhojailan, 2012).

The following sections describe in detail the six phases of thematic analysis as introduced by Braun and Clarke (2006), and include 1) familiarisation with the data 2) generating initial codes 3) searching for themes 4) reviewing themes 5) defining and naming themes, and 6) producing the report.

#### **4.7.2.1. Familiarisation with the Data**

After data collection, all the interviews were transcribed word for word to Arabic before being translated to English, through the non-literal translation method. The translation method requires careful handling of the original data because it is not possible to produce a meaningful translation if the literal translation method is chosen (Cronin, 2006). I translated all transcripts in a way that the original meaning was preserved. However, I also sought for advice from colleagues that have an experience in the translation of texts from Arabic to English, in order to ensure a more accurate translation. The data were treated with complete confidentiality and anonymity, so that the identities of the participants were not exposed. Finally, once the English texts were carefully translated, I started identifying patterns and creating themes. At this stage, I listened to the interview tapes over and over again, in order to be immersed in the data. In the same vein, Braun and Clarke state that the main purpose of this stage is to find out the depth and breadth the data that was collected.

#### **4.7.2.2. Generating Initial Codes**

Once the data familiarisation process was completed, I started immediately to design initial codes from the data set. According to Boyatzis, this phase of thematic analysis is “the most basic element of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon” (1998, p. 63). In the same token, Patton (2002) describes this process as a

way to look at the data as it is before they are given a name or a label. In this stage of analysis, I worked manually. In addition, the data were organized into meaningful groups, so that repeated concepts (themes) could be identified and coded. In terms of coding, Braun & Clarke (2006) assert that researchers should code as much as possible any part of the data that could be a potential theme. During coding, I utilized the “block and file” technique (Grbich, 2012). I used this method to conduct a two-level analysis: (1) each participant's transcript was individually and manually coded, line by line, and (2) the similar quotes gathered from all participants were classified into segments and arranged in a table for further analysis (see Appendices 6 and 7).

Once I identified potential patterns, the search for themes began. This was achieved when I read the coded segments several times and compared them to each other, in order to identify any similarities or differences. This helped me to provide a bigger picture of the role of PR and PD in relationship-building between Libya and Italy. Braun & Clarke (2006) described this technique as a thematic map that helps to find the relationship among themes, as well as make them visual.

#### **4.7.2.3. Searching for Themes**

After creating initial codes from the data set, I started searching for any connections among potential themes, by collating the relevant codes in order to create themes and sub-themes. According to Braun & Clarke, this phase “re-focuses the analysis at the broader level of themes, rather than codes, involves sorting the different codes into potential themes and collating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes” (2006, p. 89). Data analysis helped the researcher to visualise the data, as well as design different codes into themes.

#### **4.7.2.4. Reviewing Themes**

After identifying a number of themes, I started to refine them and create a thematic map in order to arrange them. This was achieved in two phases: in the first phase, the codes were reviewed and tested. During this phase, the themes were rearranged, meaning divided, collapsed or even discarded, in order to produce the complete thematic map. In the second phase, the themes were checked again against the whole dataset, in order to understand how the new themes that emerge from reviewing the themes are a result of genuine reflection of the original sources (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Furthermore, Patton's (1990) bilateral standards for judging categories -internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity - were used in the final thematic map. The philosophy of these two criteria needs to be internally coherent as well as the identifiable distinctions between themes are required (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

#### **4.7.2.5. Defining and Naming Themes**

During the process of defining and naming the themes, the main point was for the themes to be ready for the analysis. The terms 'define' and 'refine' indicate the core of every theme, as well as all of the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This was achieved when I returned to the collated data extracts for every theme that had been arranged in a coherent and consistent manner with each other. In the same token, Braun & Clarke argue that "it is necessary to consider the themes themselves, and each theme in relation to the others" (2006, p. 92). Furthermore, I wrote a detailed analysis for every individual theme and identified the 'story' of each theme, which in turn needs to be connected with the entire 'story'. In this regard, Braun & Clarke assert that this point needs to be considered by researchers, in order to prevent any overlap among the themes. As part of the refinement, I also identified some sub-themes. The latter can be useful for "giving structure to a particularly large and complex theme, as well as for demonstrating the hierarchy of meaning within the data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 92).

#### **4.7.2.6. Producing the Report**

The last stage of these six steps is producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). During this phase, I arranged the data and undertook the analysis in order to produce the final report. The final report can be found in the forthcoming chapters (5 and 6), which was embedded in an analytic narrative to illustrate the role of PR and PD in relationship-building between Libya and Italy.

#### **4.8. Ethical Considerations**

Throughout the study, moral integrity was seen as a key element in order to make sure that the research approach and the findings are reliable and valid. It is worth mentioning that ethical considerations are different from one field to another and from one topic to another. Ethics are very complicated because of factors like the nature of research itself, methodology, as well as participants (Abdelhay, 2014). In a similar vein, Alderson (2004) argues that research ethics are based on the following elements: (1) sensitive issues should be respected by researchers, while resources should be used efficiently (2) all participants' rights should be recognized and respected, and (3) best results of research ethics are how to reduce harms to any of participants as well as to promote benefits. Ethical concerns may appear at any stage of research (Abdelhay, 2014). In this regard, Cohen et al., (2000) state that:

Ethical issues may stem from the kinds of problems investigated by social scientists and the methods they use to obtain valid and reliable data. In theory at least, this means that each stage in the research sequence may be a potential source of ethical problems (p. 49).

Since this study seeks to identify the role of PR and PD in relationship-building certain steps were followed to ensure that this study was compliant with research ethics for all participants. As explained earlier, an abstract of the study that included the title, the aims, the research questions, and the consent form was sent to all interested parties: the Libyan Foreign Ministry,

the Italian Foreign Ministry, as well as to all participants. Moreover, all data collection was approved by Northumbria University's Research and Ethics Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2016 (see Appendices 3, 4 and 5).

Accordingly, the following section illustrates the ethical issues emerging from the data collection process.

#### **4.8.1. Confidentiality**

Confidentiality “must be assured as the primary safeguard against unwanted exposure” (Christians, 2011, p. 66). In this study, all participants' names were omitted, as well as any other kind of information that might refer back to the participants' identity, to ensure confidentiality and to protect their rights and privacy. In this regard, Bryman (2001) argues that:

The issue of harm to participants is further addressed in ethical codes by advocating care over maintaining the confidentiality of records. This means that the identities and records of individuals should be maintained as confidential. This injunction also means that care needs to be taken when findings are being published to ensure that individuals are not identified or identifiable (p. 480).

All interviews and signed consent forms were saved in a secure place throughout the study, while all the information is available only to the researcher himself. It should be mentioned that in this study, in order to present the quotes from the interviews, participants are described based on the nature of their positions: Prime Minister, Foreign Minister or Ambassador.

#### **4.8.2. Anonymity**

Although some participants did not mind giving their names, anonymity was granted to everyone without any exceptions. For instance, a former Prime Minister he said: “it is totally up to you, if you want to show my name”. In this regard, Hoonaard (2003) states that “the question of collective anonymity is of considerable interest, not only to aboriginal and culture communities where a collective identity prevails but also to other groups” (p. 146).

Furthermore, I pledged that the participants' names would not be identified in this thesis or any other kind of work that might be published. All participants were reassured that the data will only be used for the purpose of this study, once I finish my study, the data will be destroyed.

What's more, all the data was saved based on the compliance with Northumbria's Safe Storage Data Policy, as well as the Data Protection Act (1998). Since this study is qualitative, audio recordings were used in order to keep an accurate record of all the interviews.

#### **4.8.3. Transparency**

During and even before the interview process, I provided as much details as possible about the topic to all participants, especially in respect of the nature of the study, the main purpose of the interviews, along with some other information about the researcher himself (see Appendices 3, 4 & 5). As argued by Bryman & Bell (2007), potential participants should be given more details about a topic because it might help them to decide about whether they are willing to participate in a study or not. Gomm (2008) also asserts that it is necessary to:

explain as fully as possible, and in terms meaningful to participants, what the research is about, who is undertaking it and financing it, why it is being undertaken, and how it is to be disseminated and not as a once-and-for-all prior event, but as a process, subject to re-negotiation over time (p. 376).

Once participants accepted to be take part and an appointment for interviews was arranged, I provided the consent form in order to be signed by each participant. As argued by Dickson-Swift et al, (2007), informed consent could be assessed according to the following criteria:

1. Disclosure, which means a complete description of the topic under investigation, as well as the fact that participants should be warned of sensitive topics that might be discussed.
2. Understanding: a clear understanding and entire awareness of the topic being studied and to what they are consenting to.



3. Voluntariness: participants should join the study voluntarily and be made aware that they can withdraw at any moment.

#### **4.8.4. Free Speech**

In this study and during the interview process, I gave the participants enough time in order to express their views freely. In addition, they were also informed that they had the right not to answer any questions or to even withdraw at any point during the interview. For this study, I used semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions because this approach encourages participants to engage with me and express their own opinion. Finally, one of the advantages of the Libyan revolution (February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011) is free speech, which has allowed both me and the participants of this study to express their views freely regarding the topic under investigation.

#### **4.9. Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the main question of the study and the questions related to it. Since this study is qualitative, it seeks to obtain as much information as possible from the participants about the research topic. The chapter has clarified the rationale behind selecting specific methods and the appropriateness of these methods in answering the questions of the study. The chapter has also presented the methodological design steps of the study which involved an explanation and a discussion of the important aspects of this design, including the qualitative approach, data collection methods and analysis. It is worth mentioning that the translation method has been applied in this study, due to the lack of information about the Libyan society in the English language. What's more, although the majority of the participants speak both Arabic and English, I decided to conduct all interviews in Arabic in order to obtain as much information as possible, which is another reason behind applying the translation method.

Regarding the ethical considerations, significant attention has been paid throughout the study to this aspect in order to ensure that the study methods and findings are reliable and valid. Furthermore, the six phases of thematic analysis, as introduced by Braun and Clarke (2006), namely 1) familiarisation with the data 2) generating initial codes 3) searching for themes 4) reviewing themes 5) defining and naming themes, and 6) producing the report, have been discussed. This approach, as a method of qualitative data analysis, has helped me in obtaining information in deep details from the participants. This data will be analysed in the next two chapters which evaluate the role of PR and PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy before and after the fall of the Gaddafi regime.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion Chapter: Public Relations and Public Diplomacy during the Gaddafi era**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This is the first chapter of the thesis that examines PR and PD in terms of their roles in building relationships between Libya and Italy during the last decade of Colonel Gaddafi's rule in Libya when negotiations began with Italy in order to resolve disputes concerning the Italian colonisation of Libya. I first explore the political, economic and diplomatic changes that happened during the Gaddafi regime and their effect on Libyan-Italian relations. Then, I analyse the data obtained from the twenty semi-structured interviews with senior Libyan and Italian diplomats. Since there is limited existing literature about the phenomenon under investigation in the Arab World, I present the data from a thematic analysis. This analytic method allowed me to capture the emerging themes from the phenomenon, which to my knowledge, provides the first in-depth exploration of the role of PR and PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy before and after the fall of the Gaddafi regime. To help draw out the key themes and ideas emerging from the interviews, I incorporate relevant and appropriate theory and literature throughout the analysis.

This chapter aims to explain the results of the thematic analysis, based on participants' conceptions and knowledge about the role of PR and PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy during the Gaddafi period. In order to obtain first-hand information about the role of PR and PD in relationship building between Libya and Italy, participants are asked questions relating to their experiences and knowledge about the topic being investigated. These questions are presented in Appendix (1). The resulting interview data is reviewed by using the thematic analysis technique, which is a process that helped me to identify patterns and meaningful themes from the data during the analytical process. In the process of analysing the

data, Braun & Clarke's (2006) guide to a six-phase analysis, as explained in the previous chapter, was used. Throughout this process, the data was coded, which yielded initial identifiable themes relating to the role of PR and PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy during the Gaddafi era (see figure 5.1).

During the stage of coding the data, I used the *block and file* technique, as presented by Grinch (2012). As previously explained, this technique is conducted in two stages: (1) each participant's transcript is individually and manually coded, line by line, an example can be seen in (Appendix 6); (2) similar quotes gathered from all participants are classified into segments and arranged in a table for further analysis (see Appendix 7). After potential patterns are recognised, I looked for themes and groups with similarities and differences between them in order to produce the complete thematic map, which can be seen in (figure 5.2). These thematic maps, either the initial or the final map, are a visual representation of the link between main themes and sub-themes that helped to build Libyan-Italian relations during Gaddafi's rule.

Figure 5.1: Initial Thematic Map of Libyan-Italian Relations: Elements that Shaped Libyan-Italian Relations during the Gaddafi era.

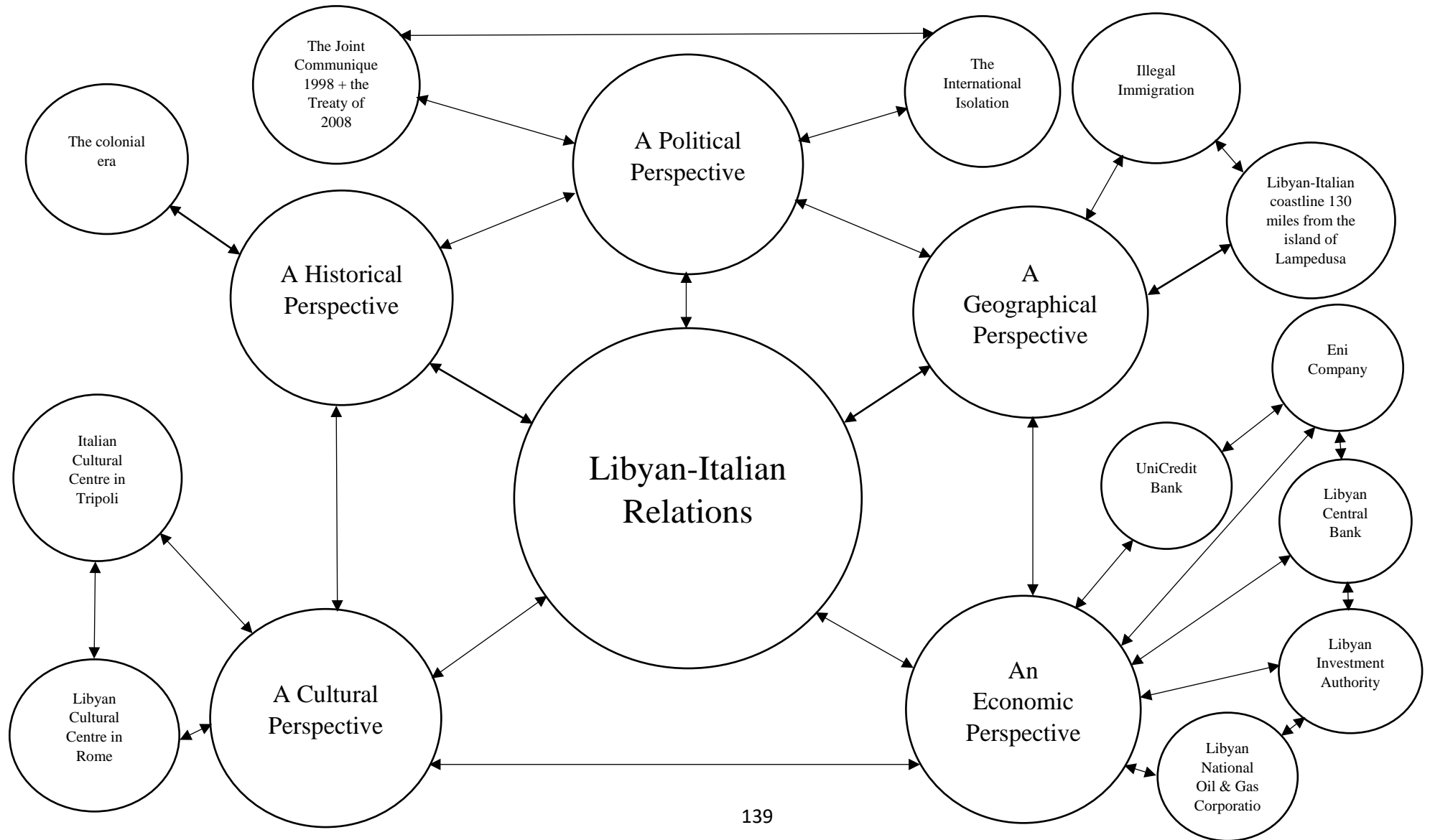
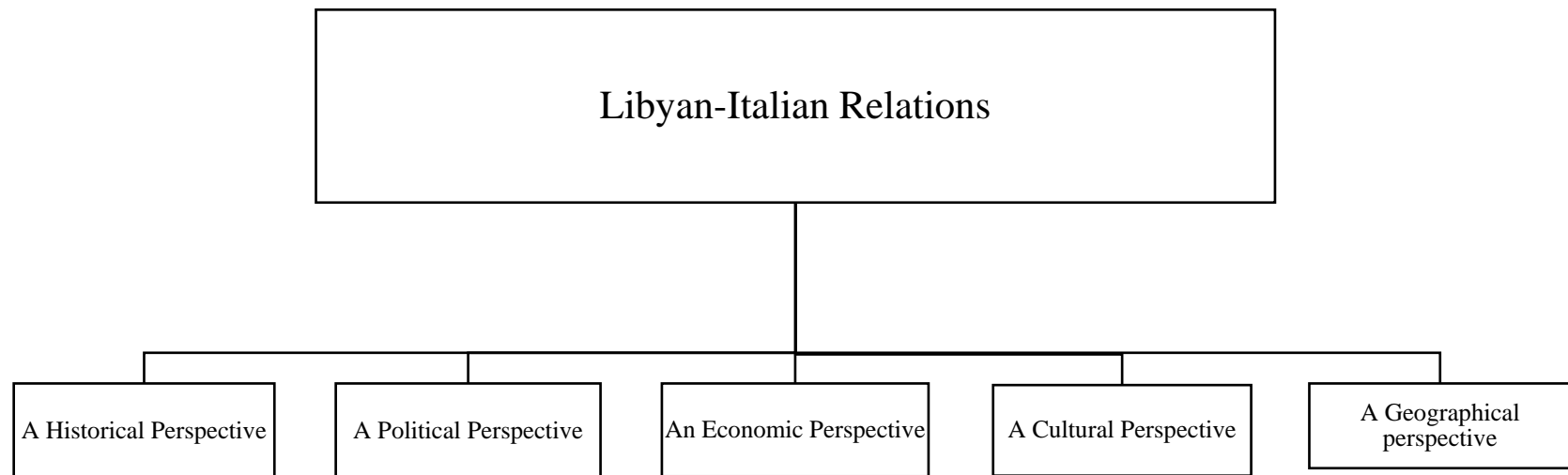


Figure 5.2: Final Thematic Map of Libyan-Italian Relations: Elements that Shaped Libyan-Italian Relations during the Gaddafi era.



## **5.2. The Development of the Diplomatic–Political Environment during the Gaddafi’s era**

Before discussing the role of PR and PD in building relations between Libya and Italy, it is necessary to explore the diplomatic-political position during the Gaddafi regime from 1969 until 2011- with Western countries and in particular with Italy. During the four decades of Gaddafi’s rule the diplomatic-political environment witnessed many changes in Gaddafi’s policy towards Western countries which, also reflected on Libyan-Italian ties (Stottlemire, 2012). In this regard, for instance, Foreign Minister 10 asserted that:

The relationship between Libya and Italy cannot be built outside the framework of Libya's relations with the European Union (EU) as well as the United States (US) because Italian policy is an integral part of EU' policy and also is deeply influenced by US' policy as Italy is a strong ally of America. When the EU and the US imposed sanctions on Gaddafi's regime, the relationship between Libya and Italy was affected.

In the same context, another interviewee emphasised that:

Prime Minister 1: Italy, in terms of its relationship with Libya is usually affected in accordance with its regional dimension which is based on the EU' policy, and also at the international level due to its relationship with the US.

During Gaddafi's rule in Libya, the diplomatic–political environment could be described by delineating three stages: The stage of revolutionary thought, the stage of international isolation and the new era of relationships.

### **5.2.1. The Stage of Revolutionary Thought**

Since the outset of so-called the One September Revolution in 1969, after a bloodless coup overthrowing the monarchy that had ruled Libya under King Idris since its independence in 1951 (Abdelgader, 2012). Gaddafi derived his ideological revolutionary thought from the former Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, and he was very impressed by Nasser’s revolutionary policies. Gaddafi's admiration for Gamal Abdel Nasser's revolutionary ideas pushed him to create the same system in Libya in terms of creating the Free Unionist Officers Movement and the Revolutionary Command Council as well as adopting the same creed of Arab Nationalism (St John, 2008).

During the first ten years of his rule, Gaddafi founded what was known as the "Direct Popular Authority" based on popular congresses and popular committees, which were continued till 2011 (Gaddafi, 2005). The Philosophy of Direct Popular Authority as described by Gaddafi in his Third Universal Theory and the Green Book based on power derived from the Libyan people through the popular committees (Wright, 2012). In order to spread these ideas-locally and internationally- Gaddafi established many research centres such as the Green Book Research Centre, which fulfilled its role in advocating Gaddafi's revolutionary ideas, (St John, 2008).

In this regard, Ambassador 15 stated that:

There is no doubt that the political and diplomatic environment changed when Gaddafi came to power in Libya in 1969, especially when Gaddafi announced the so-called Cultural Revolution in the Speech of Zuwara in 1973. Since then, Gaddafi founded the Libyan Revolutionary Committees Movement, which was the ruling party in Libya. The Revolutionary Committees Movement was the political arm of the Gaddafi regime that controlled Libya's political life throughout Gaddafi's rule. The name of the Libyan Embassies around the world changed to Popular Bureaux. The mission of the Popular Bureaux was promulgating revolutionary thought, rather than a diplomatic role. Gaddafi presented this in the Green Book and the Third Universal Theory.

A similar view can be seen in a statement by another participant:

Foreign Minister 11: Since the outset of the so-called Revolution of One September 1969, one of the obstacles that we had faced, which negatively affected the performance of the Libyan diplomats as well as the diplomatic sector was the Declaration of Popular Revolution in 1973, and also the establishment of the Revolutionary Committees Movement. The Revolutionary Party (the Revolutionary Committees Movement) took control of the country and its institutions, since then, this party had the power to appoint Ambassadors and Foreign Ministers based on their loyalty to revolutionary thought and the leader of the revolution, Gaddafi.

Another interviewee stated that:

Prime Minister 3: It was obvious that Gaddafi's regime was a totalitarian regime, however, Gaddafi declared the so-called Direct Popular Authority, and he claimed that the Libyan people held power through the popular committees. This philosophy affected Libya's diplomatic relations with other countries, when the name of Libyan Embassies was changed to Popular Bureaux.



Yet another interviewee said that:

Foreign Minister 12: the first twenty years of Gaddafi's rule in Libya was completely different with many other countries in terms of political and diplomatic concepts. Because Gaddafi sought to introduce the concept of popular diplomacy to the World through practising direct popular democracy. However, these beliefs were not recognised by the international community. Therefore, the main mission of the Foreign Ministries and Embassies was to contribute to the export and dissemination of these beliefs across the world.

Accordingly, it could be said that Libya's relations with Italy did not witness any development during the first two decades of Gaddafi's rule in Libya. Despite the fact that once Gaddafi arrived in power and expelled all remaining Italian ex-colonists, relations between the two countries continued, in particular, commercial relations, especially involving the energy sector. The relations between the two countries continued until the late eighties when the UN, the US and the EU imposed commercial and diplomatic sanctions on Gaddafi's regime.

### **5.2.2. The Stage of International Isolation**

Since Gaddafi came to power in 1969, Libyan relations with Western countries had deteriorated. More specifically, Libya's ties with the USA reached a low level of relations in the late eighties, because Gaddafi's regime was accused of involvement in terrorist acts that targeted Western interests (Stottlemire, 2012). When ex-President of the United States of America Ronald Reagan took office in January 1981, his administration put diplomatic, economic, and military pressure on Gaddafi's regime. In 1986 the Reagan administration bombed Benghazi and Tripoli and classified Libya as one of the countries supporting terrorism. It was declared a "rogue state" (St John, 2008). The latter states that after the USA raid, Gaddafi's regime led a campaign of reprisals against America in particular and Western countries in general. Relationships between Gaddafi's regime and Western countries were characterized as thorny and unsteady for more than three decades of Colonel Gaddafi's rule. Gaddafi's regime was accused of involvement in many terrorist acts such as an attack on US embassy employees in Khartoum and a failed missile attack on a USA installation on the

Italian island of Lampedusa. In 1984, Gaddafi's officers shot British police officer Yvonne Fletcher outside the Libyan embassy in London. Furthermore, Gaddafi's regime was linked to the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland in December 1988 and UTA flight 772 over Niger in September 1989. All these activities led to a rupture in relationships between Libya and Western countries (Vandewalle, 2012).

Prime Minister 1: From the end of the 1980s until the beginning of the 2000s, Gaddafi called this period a stage of national confrontation. The fact that, as a result of Gaddafi's terrorism activities in the international arena, Libya had suffered a lot from its international isolation, and also many restrictions had been imposed on it. For example, Libyan-American relations had been cut since 1980, and then ties between the two countries returned in 2003 after the hostility that lasted for nearly a quarter of a century. This, of course, reflected on Libya's international relations.

In the same vein, another participant argued that:

Prime Minister 3: For more than two decades, Gaddafi's regime lived under a long siege and isolation as a result of the policy that was practised by Gaddafi and whereby he was at enmity with the international community and fellow Arab countries alike. There is no doubt that this affected the political-diplomatic environment in Libya until Gaddafi changed his approach towards the international community.

Likewise, another participant asserted that:

Foreign Minister 9: During the Gaddafi era, especially the first three decades of his rule, Libya's ties with the rest of the World had been affected by many elements such as the Lockerbie case, the executions and assassinations that had been carried out by Gaddafi's regime against opponents, and Gaddafi's support for terrorist groups. All these activities had led to the isolation of the Gaddafi regime diplomatically, politically and economically.

Similarly, another participant emphasised the reasons that led the international community to impose sanctions on Gaddafi's regime.

Ambassador 20: It could be said that the period of the seventies, eighties and until the mid-nineties was one of the worst stages of Libya's foreign policy. Because Gaddafi's foreign policy was far from the diplomatic concept of bilateral relations. It was an extremist policy and greatly influenced bilateral relations with other countries.

In 1991, the governments of the USA and the UK issued accusations against two Libyans officers for bombing Pan Am flight 103 in 1988, also in the same year, governments of the USA and the UK and France demanded that Gaddafi hand over the two suspects. When

Gaddafi refused to hand over the suspects, in 1992, the UN Security Council passed a resolution imposing limited sanctions on Gaddafi's regime. In the following year, these sanctions were tightened to include diplomatic, economic and military sanctions (St John, 2003).

Ambassador 13: In 1996, there was an intention from both Gaddafi and the international community, especially the USA and the UK, to settle outstanding issues such as the murder of the British police officer in 1984, the Lockerbie case in 1988, and UTA flight 772 over Niger in 1989 etc. Once a solution had been reached on these issues, Gaddafi entered a new era of relations with western countries.

As a consequence of Gaddafi's terrorist activities in the international arena, the UN imposed a suffocating siege on Libya. In this regard, one of the participants in this study stated that:

Foreign Minister 7: In 1991, the UN Security Council issued resolutions no 731 and no 748 that included, the following sanctions: The imposition of a flight ban on Libya, neither take offs from Libyan land, landing on it or even overflying its territory. In addition, it was prohibited to sell aircraft as well aeronautical equipment. The supply of weapons or other military equipment or services was prohibited. The ban also included the reduction of diplomatic missions operating in Libya as well as economic and commercial sanctions.

In the late nineties, after a long period of commercial and diplomatic isolation, the signs of change appeared. Gaddafi had shown flexibility in his policy towards Western countries, when he had accepted an Anglo-American suggestion of a trial at the International Court in the Hague under Scottish Law of the two officers suspected in the Lockerbie case (St John, 2003). When Gaddafi's regime handed over the two suspects, the UN Security Council issued a resolution for the sanctions to be lifted partly. After long-term negotiations between the USA and UK diplomats with their Libyan counterparts, the sanctions were revoked completely in 2003. Since then, and after nearly 15 years of international isolation, Gaddafi's regime entered a new era of relationships with Western countries and in particularly with Italy.

### 5.2.3. A New Era of Relationships

From the outset of the twenty-first century, Gaddafi took many substantial decisions on a regional and an international level that led to renewing relationships with the international community. For instance, on the regional level when he defused the Libyan-Egyptian war, also the end of Libya's intervention in Chad etc., (Stottlemyre, 2012). While the main turning point on the international level started when Gaddafi's regime agreed to pay compensation to victims' families of the Lockerbie case and also to the family of the British police officer Yvonne Fletcher. Furthermore, Gaddafi's regime freed five Bulgarian nurses after they were sentenced to death after being accused of injecting children with HIV / AIDS in Benghazi. He also agreed to abandon WMD (Lutterbeck, 2009). Following the attacks of 9 /11/2001, Gaddafi condemned the attacks and expressed solidarity with the victims and also announced he was joining the war on terrorism (Mezran & De Maio, 2007). It should be mentioned that the change in Gaddafi's foreign policy was accompanied by a series of internal reforms which included political and economic reforms. He also declared an amnesty for political prisoners as well as the abolition of the death penalty etc., (Abdelgader, 2012).

Prime Minister 1: From the end of the nineties until 2011, Gaddafi's relations with Western countries were completely changed in a positive way. At the end of the 1990s, I was the Prime Minister and my government led the negotiation with Western countries in London especially the USA and the UK, and this continued for more than five years, and ended up with an agreement covering all outstanding issues, thus Libya entered a new era of partnership and friendship with the international community.

Likewise, another participant added that:

Prime Minister 3: Unlike the first three decades of Gaddafi's rule, the last 10 years were much better because Gaddafi's regime had made many political and economic reforms which reflected positively on his relations with Western countries. In regard to the political and diplomatic level, Libya returned to the international community and had become a strong partner.

In the same vein, one of the interviewees said that:

Foreign Minister 8: Since the beginning of 2000, Gaddafi changed his policies and entered into secret negotiations to resolve many outstanding issues with Western countries such as the Lockerbie case, WMD etc. Once these issues were resolved,

the UN lifted the sanctions, and then Gaddafi's regime immediately entered into new relationships with the international community.

All these major shifts in Gaddafi's foreign policy, as well as the flexibility that was shown by Gaddafi in his dealings with the international community, had paved the way to normality between Libya and Western countries, which reflected positively on Libya's relations with Italy (Stottlemire, 2012). In contrast, after a long time of international isolation, the USA and EU eventually lifted the long-standing embargo they had imposed on Gaddafi's regime. Then both entered into a new era of relationships with Gaddafi's regime and Libya became a strong partner of the EU members, especially Italy, in a number of key domains such as energy, trade, and illegal immigration etc., (Vandewalle, 2012).

In regard to the reasons that prompted Gaddafi to change his policy and enter into negotiations with Western countries, one of the participants stated that:

Ambassador 13: Although Gaddafi entered into negotiations with Western countries at the end of the 1990s, I believe that the 9/11 attacks and the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq prompted Gaddafi to give up his nuclear programme and engage in direct negotiations with the international community. There is no doubt that he had succeeded in overcoming the disputes with the Western nations and entered a new phase of relationships.

In the same vein, another participant clarified that:

Ambassador 20: With the outset of the twenty-first century, Gaddafi changed his policy and he was interested in returning to the international community and abandoning nuclear programmes and weapons of mass destruction and he also was eager to solve all outstanding issues with Western countries. Due to international pressures on Gaddafi's regime, especially by the USA, Gaddafi was forced to change his policy.

Since 2003, many European leaders such as the Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, the British Prime Minister Tony Blair, and the French President Nicolas Sarkozy had visited Libya. Furthermore, in 2008, the Secretary of State for the USA Condoleezza Rice met Gaddafi in the Libyan capital Tripoli, after the ties between both countries had been cut for more than a quarter of a century (Al Jazeera, 2008). In return, Gaddafi visited many

European countries such as Italy and France. In 2004, he visited the Headquarters of the European Commission in Brussels and met with Romano Prodi the head of the European Commission, and Javier Solana, EU High Representative for Foreign Policy. He also met with the Belgian Prime Minister and Belgian businessmen (Al Mustaqbal, 2004). What's more, after four decades of ruling in Libya, for the first time in 2009 Gaddafi visited New York to participate in UN General Assembly meetings (Arabic Web, 2009).

There is no doubt that all these changes in Gaddafi's foreign policies over the last ten years of his rule in Libya, helped him to become an important partner in the Mediterranean basin and North Africa region with the EU members and particularly Italy. As soon as Gaddafi's relations with Western countries were improved, Italy entered into strong diplomatic, economic and commercial relations with Gaddafi's regime. Libyan-Italian ties culminated in 2008 when Gaddafi and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi signed the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation in Benghazi which is the most important and largest agreement signed by Libya with a European country (Lutterbeck, 2009; Ronzitti, 2009).

#### **5.2.4. From Revolution and Isolation to Partnership and Friendship: Gaddafi's relations with Italy**

As mentioned earlier in chapter 2, Libyan-Italian relations have witnessed many developments beginning with Italy's occupation of Libya in 1911, where the Libyans fought a war of resistance against Italian colonisation for more than two decades, ending in 1931 with the execution of Omar al-Mukhtar, the icon of Libyan national resistance (Hamdan, 1968; Lombardi, 2012). Relations between the two countries have gone through different stages until they reached a pinnacle when the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation was signed in 2008 (Ronzitti, 2009). The latter argues that the depth of relationships should be stressed because both countries complement one another in many areas such as political, economic, trade and security fields. Furthermore, geographically, the

Italian coastline is very close to Libya with Lampedusa Island only 130 miles from Libya. Moreover, historically, relations between Libya and Italy- despite the painful colonial era - stretch back for many decades when Italy invaded Libya in 1911 and then Libya became an Italian colony until the World War II (Lombardi, 2012). In regard to Libyan-Italian relations, as argued by many participants in this study they should be linked with historical, economic, political frameworks as well as the regional and international background which has coloured the history between the two countries.

For example, Ambassador 19: From my personal experience of working more than three decades as a diplomat, the relationship between Libya and Italy, whether during Gaddafi's era or after the revolution of 2011, is always seen from aspects of historical, economical, and political standpoints. It also involves Libya's relationship with the international community and the EU.

At the same line, another participant stated that:

Foreign Minister 10: The ties between Libya and Italy should be assessed from frameworks that have ruled the relationship between the two countries, which are:

1. Historical dimension: The historical dimension had dominated relations between the two countries for a long time. Thereby, Italian diplomats always seek, in their meetings with Libyan counterparts, to try to overcome the Italian colonial past, at the same time, as an old coloniser, they strive to preserve Libya as an ancient colony. Yet, it should be mentioned that regardless of the disadvantages of Italy's 1911–42/43 colonialism in Libya, it could be said that Italy helped in developing Libya in several areas such as infrastructure and agriculture.
2. Economical dimension: Italy is considered the first investor and partner of Libya, especially in the field of oil and gas. The size of Italian investment in Libya is greater than that of any other European country. Due to their economic interests, for example, Italy did not make any complaint when Gaddafi expelled all remaining Italian colonists in Libya when he took power.
3. Political dimension: Due to the colonial legacy as well as Gaddafi's unpredictable policy toward Italy, all Italian governments had adopted a flexible and balanced policy with Gaddafi during his rule in Libya in order to resolve their political issues with Libya, and also to ensure their economic interests.
4. Regional and international dimension: When Gaddafi's regime resolved their problems on the regional and international level, particularly with the USA and EU, that led to improving Libyan-Italian relations on many levels. Because Italy's policy is an integral part of EU policy.

Another participant added that:

Ambassador 18: There is no doubt that Libya and Italy have had a very long relationship that stretches back for many years with historical, political and economic roots.

Throughout the years of Colonel Gaddafi's rule in Libya, Libyan-Italian relations were never easy to build because the relations between the two countries were affected by many issues, most importantly the colonial heritage and the international economic and diplomatic isolation which was imposed on the Gaddafi regime for a long time as well as the unpredictable behaviour of Gaddafi (Crocì & Valigi, 2013; Ronzitti, 2009). It should be noted that Libya's relations with the international community, especially with the EU, influenced Italy's ties with Libya because Italy is influenced by the policy of the EU. As argued by Crocì & Valigi (2013) that in order to build a solid and stable partnership with Libya, Italy always seeks to embed its relationship with Libya, especially with regard to illegal immigration, in the EU framework.

Italy's relationship with Libya was characterised by tension and instability when Gaddafi came to power in 1969 as was relationships with other European countries (St John, 2008). During the first three decades of Gaddafi's rule, the colonial past and what Italy's colonisers did in Libya, was a constant theme of Gaddafi's speeches. Gaddafi was always demanding compensation and an apology and sometimes threatening to cut off economic co-operation especially in the energy domain with Italy. The main goal of this policy was to exercise pressures on Italy's governments (Powell, 2015). In 1970, One year after Gaddafi came to power, he expelled Italians who had settled in Libya during the occupation era. In contrast, as a result of its economic interests in Libya, the Italian government had adopted a conciliatory response to ensure the continuation of economic relations (Crocì & Valigi, 2013). In this regard, the Italian National Hydrocarbon Corporation, (Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi (ENI), had played a very significant role in maintaining and continuing the Libyan-Italian ties especially in the energy field (Ronzitti, 2009).



Ambassador 14: What should be noted in regard to Libyan-Italian ties is that Europe's energy giant (ENI) has played a very important role in building bridges between Italy and Libya whether during Gaddafi's time or even nowadays.

In 1986, the relations between the two countries reached an all-time low of diplomatic representation when Gaddafi's regime launched a missile that fell in Italian territorial waters close to Lampedusa Island in retaliation for the USA bombing of Benghazi and Tripoli. Because Gaddafi claimed that the USA aircraft took off from Italian bases, despite the Italian authorities' denial that USA aircraft did not take off or even overfly its territory (Lombardi, 2012). There is no doubt that the international sanctions that were imposed on Gaddafi's regime, which lasted for more than ten years, affected Italy's relations with Libya. In this regard, it should be asserted that the ties between the two countries deteriorated diplomatically, however they still continued on the economic level, particularly in the energy domain (Ronzitti, 2009).

Throughout the years of international isolation of the Gaddafi regime, the Italian strategy was to maintain relations with Libya in order to safeguard its economic interests, most importantly oil and gas. Furthermore, even during the international isolation, Italian governments preferred the inclusive approach rather than the coercive one in its dealing with Gaddafi's regime. It could be said that this was a pragmatic approach which had been adopted by all Italian governments through a diplomatic compromise approach to maintaining their relations with Gaddafi's regime, (Mezran & De Maio, 2007). Once, Gaddafi's relations with the international community was improved and the international sanctions were lifted, the Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi was the first European leader to visit Libya in 2003 (Lombardi, 2012). After more than a decade of intense negotiations and dialogue, normal relations between the two countries began with the signing of the "Joint Communiqué" in 1998, and it culminated with the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation in 2008, then both entered a new phase of economic, political and diplomatic relations etc., (Ronzitti, 2009).

Ambassador 17: What I would like to recall is that the relations between Libya and Italy are very deep which could be traced even before the time of Gaddafi. There is a kind of continuity in Libyan-Italian relations that cannot be changed by governments. It should be emphasised that the colonial era had affected the ties between the two countries especially in the beginning of the Gaddafi period. However, both countries had normalised their relations after a long journey of diplomatic negotiations.

As stated by one of the participants the rationale behind normalising the ties between the two countries was that:

Ambassador 19: The important role of Italy in Libya with the EU and the international community as well. Rome was the key player for Gaddafi's rehabilitation to the international community as well as the EU. There is no doubt that Rome represented a focal point for Libya's foreign policy at several levels. We can say that Rome is one of the most important embassies in the World that touches Libya's national security. In addition, it has a geopolitical importance to Libya and this importance comes from historical and geographical relations between the two countries and also economic relations based on co-operation in the field of energy, oil, and gas.

#### **5.2.4.1 Normalising the Ties between Libya and Italy during Gaddafi's Rule**

By tracing the history of Libyan-Italian relations since Gaddafi came to power in 1969, it could be noted that Italy had used a conciliatory policy with Libya that is because first and foremost, Italy relies heavily on Libya's crude oil as well as natural gas in its energy policy (Varvelli, 2010). In addition, due to geographic proximity, Libya has played a very significant role in Mediterranean basin security especially in regard to illegal immigration which is of special importance for Italy. Italian governments had sought to preserve their relationships with the Gaddafi regime on one hand and to solve Gaddafi's thorny issues aforementioned with the international community especially with the USA due to its special relationship with the USA on the other hand (Mezran & De Maio, 2007). What should be stressed in this regard is that the improvement in Gaddafi's relations with Western countries led to improving Italy's ties with Gaddafi's regime. Furthermore, Libyan-Italian relations never ended, but sometimes were characterised as shaky and unsteady especially during the years of the international isolation (Ronzitti, 2009).

In the late 1990s, Gaddafi regime had negotiations with the USA and UK in order to solve the outstanding issues between them. Meanwhile, Italy had held direct negotiations with Gaddafi as well as responding to Gaddafi's demands in regard to the period of the Italian occupation of Libya in order to achieve normal relations between the two countries (Mezran & De Maio, 2007). Throughout his rule in Libya, Gaddafi pursued Italian governments over three main issues which are: An apology for the period of Italian colonisation of Libya, the payment of compensation for damages caused by colonialism as well as uncovering the fate of the exiled Libyans to Italy (Varvelli, 2010). As result of Gaddafi's insisting on these demands, and Italy's desire for normal relations with Libya, Italy for the first time, led by Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti in 1984 agreed to pay compensation (Mezran & De Maio, 2007). Despite the sanctions that were imposed by the international community on Gaddafi's regime, the ties between the countries continued especially in regard to economic co-operation until the end of the 1990s when both countries signed the 'Joint Communiqué' (Ronzitti, 2009).

After long-term negotiations between Italian diplomats and their Libyan counterparts, they reached the point of understanding in regard to overcoming disputes centred on the colonial past through the signing of the 'Joint Communiqué' which was considered as the first step towards normal ties between the two countries (Mezran & De Maio, 2007). What should be noted in this regard, which helped in the normalisation process, was:

Prime Minister 2: Gaddafi had changed his foreign policy towards the international community in general and especially with Italy. Furthermore, during the last half of the 1990s, Libya's foreign policy had witnessed a remarkable development thanks to the efforts of many Libyan diplomats such as Omar El-Montasser, Abdel-Rahman Shalgam, Mohamed Siala and Abdel-Ati Al-Obaidi, who played an important role in building bridges between Libya and Italy.

#### **5.2.4.1.1. Signing the Joint Communiqué**

On July 1998 in Tripoli, the Libyan Foreign Minister Omar Mustafa El-Muntasser and his Italian counterpart Lamberto Dini signed the 'Joint Communiqué'. This declaration came as

a result of prolonged diplomatic negotiations begun in 1993 between both parties despite the international sanctions on Gaddafi's regime (Varvelli, 2010). As the latter argues that the aim of these diplomatic activities was to return Gaddafi's regime to the international scene as well as to try to get rid of the massive damage that was caused by Italy's colonial heritage. With regards to the importance of the joint communique in normalising the relations between the two countries on one hand, and re-admitting Gaddafi's regime to the international community on the other hand, the Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini stated that:

The recovering of Italian–Libyan relations is the essential requirement for a total re-integration of Tripoli within the international community. This means a decrease of tensions around the Mediterranean area and represents the prerequisite for the rebuilding of good neighbourhood relations and respective trust in order to avoid hostilities, to prevent terrorist attacks or direct aggression. Thus, the declaration provides for a common effort aimed at fighting terrorism, preventing the proliferation of chemical weapons and ensuring respect for Human Rights (cited in Mezran & De Maio, 2007, p. 444).

This point of view was shared by Foreign Minister 12 who asserted that:

The signing of the joint communique between the Libyan Foreign Minister Omar El-Montasser and his counterpart Lamberto Dini was considered as a very important step of the beginning in returning the relations between the two countries. Which led later to the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation.

Many Libyan-Italian diplomats considered this statement as an important step in reopening a new era of relationships between the two countries. Furthermore, both countries expressed their willingness and determination to move on from the colonial era and to open up and boost their bilateral relations on new bases such as a good-neighbourliness, mutual respect and cease hostilities between both parties etc., (Mezran & De Maio, 2007). The vast majority of the participants in this study asserted the importance of the joint communique in normalising ties between Libya and Italy such as (Prime Minister 1, Prime Minister 2, Prime Minister 5, Foreign Minister 7, Foreign Minister 10, Foreign Minister 12, Ambassador 13 and Ambassador 15 etc.). The main points of the statement as highlighted by the participants are as follows:

1. For the first time, Italy admitted and expressed its regret for the Libyan people's suffering caused by Italian colonialism;

2. Italy promised to find out the fate of exiled Libyans who were forced to depart their land during the era of Italian colonialism;
3. Italy pledged to pay compensation to Libyan victims for harm caused at the hands of the Italian colonisers;
4. Italy pledged to build schools and universities in Libya;
5. Italy promised to remove the minefields that were planted in Libya during the period of Italian colonialism and
6. Italy pledged to return to Libya all manuscripts, documents, and archaeological artifacts that were stolen during the era of the Italian occupation.

Gaddafi's regime joined the war against so-called Al Qaeda and its founder Bin Laden as well as handing over the two suspects in the Lockerbie case from 1988 and this helped Libya and Italy to continue promoting bilateral relations. In 1999, especially when the sanctions were cancelled partly by the UN, the ties between Libya and Italy had improved rapidly. The Italian Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema visited Gaddafi in order to boost diplomatic, economic and cultural cooperation (Mezran & De Maio, 2007). It should be mentioned that the Italian government's approach to the Gaddafi regime gave them the opportunity to become Libya's first partner, especially in the energy field (Varvelli, 2010). However, many political issues had prevented implementing the main points of the joint communique that were agreed. Most importantly Gaddafi was not satisfied with the amount of compensations that was provided by the Italians as well as demanding an official apology for the colonial era. Negotiations lasted for a decade between both countries, Gaddafi achieved his demands during the tenure of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, and both leaders signed the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation in 2008 (Lombardi, 2012).

#### **5.2.4.1.2. Signing the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation**

During the four decades of his rule in Libya, Colonel Gaddafi never stopped requesting all Italian governments to make a formal apology, pay compensation to the Libyan people, and investigate the fate of the Libyan exiles (Powell, 2015). Despite what had been reached in the joint communique, as pointed out earlier, Gaddafi was not totally satisfied with the

US\$100 million that Italy agreed to pay to Libya (Mezran & De Maio, 2007). Due to geographical proximity, the heavy weight of the colonial past, the role of Libya in fighting illegal immigration in the Mediterranean basin as well as Italy's dependence on the Libyan economy particularly in the field of oil and gas- all this pushed Italian governments to exercise a balanced policy toward Gaddafi's regime (Varvelli, 2010). As argued by Mezran & De Maio (2007), all Italian governments, whether left or right, had shown their desire and determination to maintain and continue Libyan-Italian relations, considering this to be the only way that would meet the interests of the both countries.

At the outset of the twenty-first century, sanctions were lifted on Gaddafi's regime and Silvio Berlusconi became the Italian Prime Minister. Silvio Berlusconi, "a brilliant salesman" who succeed in state management for a long time (Ragnedda, 2014). The latter confirmed that Berlusconi won the political elections in Italy three times: from 1994 to 1995; from 2001 to 2006; from 2008 to 2011 (2014, p. 15).

Berlusconi had built a very close relationship with Gaddafi, paving the way again for negotiations between the two countries in order to establish a new phase of bilateral relations (Crocì & Valigi, 2013). Berlusconi was convinced that it was in Italy's interest to reach a comprehensive compromise with Gaddafi's regime. In 2003, he visited Libya to satisfy Gaddafi's demands, at the same time, Berlusconi announced his desire to reach an agreement about outstanding issues with Libya concerning the period of Italian colonialism in Libya in order to close this chapter and open a new phase of bilateral relations between the two countries (Lombardi, 2012). In this regard, according to Mezran & De Maio, Berlusconi in one of his letter to Colonel Gaddafi, wrote:

. . . The realisation of a special project that could facilitate and encourage a new period of collaboration is now needed. Italy and Libya are finally ready to transform their friendship into a real partnership . . . When I started to consider a potential "special project"; I suddenly imagined a "great work" that could symbolize our flawless relationship (2007, p. 447).

It is worth mentioning that during Berlusconi's period as Prime Minister 2001-2006 Libyan-Italian relations had witnessed great economic and diplomatic development resulting from the friendship between Gaddafi and Berlusconi (Croci & Valigi, 2013). However, once again Gaddafi had returned to the theme of the Italian colonialism of Libya in order to put more pressure on Romano Prodi's government which led the country from 2006-2008 (Mezran & De Maio, 2007). Despite diplomatic efforts that were made by Prodi's government, they could not resolve the old challenges between the two countries. Old unsolved challenges between the two countries continued until the return of Berlusconi again as Prime Minister in 2008 (Mezran & De Maio, 2007).

In 2008, Berlusconi restarted the negotiations with Gaddafi's regime, and after a short period of negotiations between the two parties, both agreed to solve all outstanding issues. Consequently, Gaddafi and Berlusconi signed in Benghazi the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation that helped to put an end to the disputes related to Italian colonialism (Del Castillo, 2011). This treaty between the two countries is considered as one of the largest agreements in terms of political, economic and security co-operation that have been signed by Libyan governments with another country. Furthermore, based on this treaty Italy committed to spending US\$5 billion as compensation for the colonial era over twenty years on infrastructure projects in Libya (Lombardi, 2012). Most importantly, the treaty included an official apology for the Italian colonial injustices inflicted on the Libyan people. In Benghazi on August 30, 2008, the Italian Prime Minister in his greeting to Colonel Gaddafi and the Libyan people had expressed his regret for the colonial era, when he said that:

In the name of the Italian people, as head of the government, I feel it my duty to apologise and express my sorrow for what happened many years ago and left a scar on many of your families (cited in Ronzitti, 2009, p. 125).

According to this Treaty which included a formal apology and compensation for the Libyan people, both countries entered a "special and privileged" relationship in many domains. As

argued by Ronzitti (2009), despite the enormous costs that Italy pledged to pay to Libya, the treaty represents an important framework for a real partnership and cooperation between the two countries.

Foreign Minister 8: After long-term negotiations and dialogues, the two countries agreed to close the "chapter of the past" by signing the treaty which was a very big push for relations between the two countries. Then, both started a new era of real partnership. It is worth mentioning that what helped to sign this treaty between Rome and Tripoli is the presence of Berlusconi as Prime Minister of Italy at that time who was looking for Italy's economic interests in Libya. In return, Gaddafi granted ENI the extension of its concession contract in oil and gas in Libya until 2042.

In terms of the treaty as a reference framework of Libyan-Italo relations, one of the participants stated that:

Prime Minister 1: In 2003, I was the prime minister of Libya and I had the honour to be the first Prime Minister who put his initials to this historic agreement with Berlusconi, which has helped in normalising the ties between Libya and Italy. The treaty represented a historic agreement for both countries and Italy's apology to Libya was historic as well.

Thus, due to the importance of the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation as a reference framework of Libyan-Italo relations, the following section highlights the main points that were included in this treaty. According to Lombardi (2012), Ronzitti (2009), and Varvelli, (2010), the treaty consists of three main parts: Firstly, general principles; secondly, ending the disputes related to the colonial past; and thirdly, the new bilateral partnership.

Firstly, the general principles: It can be said that this part is dedicated to the laws and provisions derived from the charter of the UN such as respect for international legitimacy; sovereign equality between the two countries; prevention of the threat or use of force; non-interference in internal affairs as well as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. While the second part - ending the disputes related to the colonial past -most important in this regard was the official apology for the colonial period, in addition, Italy pledged to pay US\$5 billion over a 20-year period on building basic infrastructure in Libya. Most notably, all infrastructure projects will be carried out by Italian companies and they will be funded



and managed directly from Italy. In this regard in addition to what was agreed in the joint communique, Italy also committed to:

1. Construction of 200 housing units in Libya;
2. Allotment of 100 scholarships to Libyan students, to be renewed at the end of the study period for the benefit of other students;
3. In addition to a hospital for the treatment of Libyan people who lost their limbs due to mines, those casualties will be treated in specialist Italian hospitals.

Finally, the stage of a new partnership: In accordance to this treaty, Libya and Italy have entered a new era of relationship in many areas such as political, cultural and economic sectors; industrial and energy cooperation as well as cooperation in combating terrorism, organised crime, drug trafficking and illegal immigration.

On 2 March 2009, The Treaty came into force when ratifications were exchanged when Prime Minister Berlusconi visited Gaddafi in the city of Sirte in Libya. The most important thing to be pointed out is that this treaty is considered as a reference framework of Libyan-Italian relations. It helped both countries to put an end to the disputes relating to the Italian colonialism period as well as both entering a "special and privileged" relationship. Furthermore, the Treaty has contributed significantly to creating an atmosphere conducive to bilateral relations between the two countries in many domains.

Consequently, Gaddafi's relationship with Italy's governments for more than four decades had witnessed many stages starting with Italy as an enemy and coloniser and ending up with a close partnership and friendship. However, the question that arises is; to what extent did Gaddafi's regime use PR and PD to establish long-term relationships with Italian governments? More specifically, what role had been played by PR and PD when Gaddafi began negotiations with Italy in 1998, the date of the signed 'Joint Communique' until the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation was signed in 2008? The following sections explain the role of PR and PD in building relationships with Italy during Gaddafi era.

### **5.3. Public Relations during Gaddafi's Era**

I sought in this section to explore the role of PR as a tool of relationship building that had been used by Libyan and Italian diplomats in order to establish or reinforce relationships between Libya and Italy. Furthermore, I gave examples of the role PR in building relationships especially the ties between the two countries which had witnessed, as mentioned earlier, many developments during Gaddafi's era. The main aim of these examples of the phenomenon under investigation is to have 'first-hand knowledge' of the role of PR in building relationships between Libya and Italy. This study is the first that endeavours to find out the role of PR and PD in building relationships in the light of Libyan political, economic and cultural variables.

Since this study aims to reveal the role of PR and PD in relationship building between Libya and Italy, the relational approach, as pointed out earlier, was applied. The rationale behind using this approach in the field of PR is because it refers to practising the PR profession based on building relationships (Ki et al., 2015). Furthermore, it has been proven that the role of the relational approach in establishing bilateral relations based on the two-way communications model and understanding other cultures is more successful than using propaganda or one-way communication models (Almutairi, 2013; Botan & Taylor, 2004; Ferraro, 2015). By the same token, the core of PR is to create and maintain relationships between institutions and their target publics as well as among institutions themselves (Cutlip et al., 2000). As argued by Taylor (2000), one of the main roles of PR as a managerial function is to build long-term relationships. Consequently, the participants in this study were asked in detail about their opinions of the role of PR during Gaddafi's era in building relationships between Libya and Italy based on their experience and knowledge. In order to know their role the participants were asked questions such as:

Interviewer: To what extent did Gaddafi's regime use PR to build long-term relationships with Italy? More specifically, we know well that Gaddafi's regime was isolated for more

than a decade, and then in the late nineties entered into negotiations with Italy and ended up with the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation in 2008. Thus, to what extent did PR contribute to normalising the ties between the two countries?

For example, the godfather of Libyan-Italian relations who had played a very significant role in normalising the ties between the two countries stated that:

Ambassador 13: During my mission as Libyan Ambassador in Rome for more than ten years, PR was used in order to change the stereotypical image that depicted Libya as a state sponsor of terrorism. For example, my main job was to meet with many intellectuals, journalists, and party representatives as well as diplomats to gain their support to establish a new bilateral relationship based on mutual respect and benefit between the two parties.

Likewise, another interviewee added that:

Ambassador 15: PR played a key role in building relations between Rome and Tripoli (between Gaddafi and Berlusconi). It is true that we have an embassy in Rome, but the role of ambassadors was not an active role at the beginning of these relations. The relations between Gaddafi and Berlusconi were built as a result of the role of PR.

In a similar way, Foreign Minister 11 added that:

PR effectively contributed to overcoming the Italian colonial period in Libya and signing the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation.

In this regard, one of the Italian diplomats who participated in this study stated that:

Ambassador 16: For us, PR during Gaddafi's time was devoted to trying to establish a bond with the Libyan people in order to overcome all issues that related to the colonial period. In addition, we would start to look together to the future and to make sure that we identify what are the common interests between our two countries and work together to achieve this.

Based on the previous statements, it was obvious that Gaddafi regime employed PR profession in order to build relationships with Italian governments. However, a question arises in this regard, how was PR used by Gaddafi's regime in order to build solid ties with Italy? In other words, what PR tools were employed by the Gaddafi regime to enter into a new phase of bilateral relations between the two countries, putting an end to the disputes of the colonial era that lasted for more than four decades?

Ambassador 19: What helped PR to succeed in building bridges of co-operation and trust between Libya and Italy is that the Libyan economic needs, as result of the

international isolation, coincided with Italian economic needs, which pushed both countries to enter into negotiations and this resulted in a new era of partnership and co-operation.

In the same line, another interviewee asserted that:

Foreign Minister 8: It could be said that the trade dimension was dominated on the ties between Libya and Italy, where there was an Italian desire to establish economic relations with Libya and specifically through the ENI Company. ENI, which could be considered as the key player in PR, contributed significantly in normalising relations between the two countries.

Furthermore, among the PR tools that were used by Gaddafi's regime to build relations with Italy, another interviewee stated that:

Ambassador 19: Gaddafi's regime had established several associations that actually carried out the role of PR in building relationships such as the World Islamic Call Society, Wa'tasmua Charity Association and Gaddafi International Foundation for Charity Associations etc. These institutions had been conducting PR programmes through contact with their counterparts in Italy and many other countries, which had succeeded ultimately in building political, economic, and diplomatic relations between Libya and Italy.

Likewise, another interviewee added that:

Prime Minister 5: The Libyan Central Bank, the Libyan Investment Authority and the Libyan National Oil & Gas Corporation had played a very important role in creating bilateral relations between Libya and Italy. These institutions invested in many Italian institutions such as UniCredit Bank, the Fiat car company, Juventus Football Club etc. These investments were used as a tool of PR in order to establish long-term relationships between the two parties.

The previous statements of the participants articulated that there is no doubt the Gaddafi regime used the PR in order to polish his image on the international level on one hand, and to establish a long-term relationship with Italian governments on the other hand. Gaddafi's regime succeeded in entering a new era and building a special and privileged relationship with Italy, especially during Berlusconi's time as Prime Minister of Italy. In regard to the importance of using PR by governments as a tool of dialogue and negotiations, Hayes (2012) asserts that the PR profession is needed more than ever by governments because one-way communication (propaganda) no longer works, especially in terms of building relationships. Furthermore, the common interests between both countries helped the role of PR in building bilateral relations among each other. What's more, in addition to the important role that was

played by Libyan diplomats in creating relations between Gaddafi and the Italian side, Gaddafi employed several associations as PR tools to build relations with Italy (e.g. ENI and Gaddafi International Foundation for Charity Associations).

### **5.3.1. Public Relations Approaches**

This section of the study illustrates to what extent the models of PR were used in order to build or maintain Libyan-Italian relations during Gaddafi's time. PR models (as extensively explained in the literature review) that are applied in this study include Grunig & Hunt's (1984) four PR models, which are (press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical models). Furthermore, the two international models (personal influence and cultural interpreter models), which emerged as a result of the study that Grunig and his colleagues conducted in Greece, India, and Taiwan (Grunig et al., 1995). The four PR models as presented by Grunig & Hunt could be divided into one-way and two-way communication. In other words, a contact unidirectional -press agency and public information models-, and bidirectional communication -two-way asymmetrical and symmetrical models.

In summary, these models are considered as one of the main theoretical frameworks in the field of PR that have been applied in many different countries (Mackey, 2003). Moreover, these models have been widely used by many scholars in developed and developing countries as well as in many Arab countries. In addition, it has been proved that these models have played an important role in terms of description and practice of PR in order to build a long-term relationship between organisations and their audiences, as well as among organisations (Abdelhay, 2014; Al-Enad 1992; Creedon, 1993; Diab, 2010; Grunig & Grunig, 1992; Huang, 2000; Lyra, 1991). Hence, it will be explained which of these models were used during Gaddafi's era in order to build Libyan-Italian relations. In other words, could these models be applied in the light of Libyan political, economic and cultural variables to ascertain the hypothesis of its practice at the international level as has been

requested by many scholars? (See Culbertson & Chen, 1996; Hayes, 2012; Sriramesh & White, 1992; Vercic et al., 1996). In this regard, the participants in this study, based on their experience and knowledge concomitant with their positions, explicitly articulated that:

Prime Minister 6: At the beginning of creating relations with Italian governments, Gaddafi relied heavily on special envoys who had personal ties with Italian politicians such as Giulio Andreotti and Silvio Berlusconi etc. Those envoys were the ones who built personal relations between Gaddafi and Italian politicians.

Foreign Minister 11: From the start Gaddafi was eager to build personal relations with some Italian diplomats and parliamentarians. Gaddafi had strong relations with Giulio Andreotti who was Prime Minister of Italy several times, Andreotti was considered as the Godfather of the Italian-Libyan relations when it was in its initial stages.

In the same vein, another interviewee asserted that:

Ambassador 15: Gaddafi's regime depended on personal relations between Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts to build Libyan-Italian ties and these relations led to creating a personal relationship between Gaddafi and Italian leaders which later helped both countries to build bilateral relations in many domains.

Similarly, Ambassador 13 added that:

As a result of my personal relationships and the relationships of my colleagues who had worked for a long time in Italy, we managed to create many friendships with Italian politicians as well as leaders of parties etc. In one way or another, we succeeded in linking Gaddafi to many Italian politicians; this helped both countries to enter into a new era of relations and co-operation.

After representatives of the former regime were able to create personal relations with their Italian counterparts, which had reflected positively on Gaddafi's relationship with Italy, then the ties between the two parties, and the frequency and methods of communication increased.

In this respect, interviewees articulated that:

Prime Minister 1: The style of direct contact and two-way communications had helped the Gaddafi regime to build strong relations with Rome. For example, Giulio Andreotti had a very good personal relationship with Gaddafi who also formed a very close personal relationship with Berlusconi. Furthermore, Gaddafi's sons' personal relationships with some Italian politicians and some Italian sports clubs played a role in building relationships. It is worth mentioning that Gaddafi did not hire any PR firms to build relationships with Italy. He relied on direct communication / negotiations through either himself or his representatives, especially the special envoys or ambassadors in Rome.

Likewise, another interviewee added that:

Prime Minister 4: Once the personal relationship between Berlusconi and Gaddafi was built, in which PR played an important role, then the two countries had begun official contacts through negotiation and dialogue to reach a compromise formula in order to close the chapter of the colonial past.

Similarly, one of the interviewees said that:

Ambassador 19: During the era of Gaddafi's regime, PR approaches were characterised by different colours which were used and based on the stages of Libyan-Italian relations. For instance, at the end of the nineties, the two-way communication process and negotiations begun between Libya and Italy, which helped both countries to reach the signing of an official agreement, the so-called "Joint Declaration" in 1998. This agreement was considered the basis that enabled both parties to sign the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation in 2008.

In the same context, another participant emphasised that:

Foreign Minister 7: Negotiation, dialogue and continued communication with our Italian counterparts had facilitated the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation. I remember a few days before the signing of the treaty that we reached a quasi-blockage in the negotiations as a result of Gaddafi's insistence on adding some details to the treaty. Myself, as Foreign Minister, Prime Minister Baghdadi Mahmoudi, and Mohamed Siala who was in charge of the Department of Cooperation in the Foreign Ministry met with Gaddafi, and we discussed with him until we reached a consensus formula. On the other hand, at the same time, Berlusconi was in personal contact with Gaddafi on the phone and I was the interpreter. Then Berlusconi came to Benghazi and the treaty was signed.

The previous statements show that Gaddafi's regime, during the period of negotiation with Italian diplomats, had depended on personal relations, dialogue, and two-way communications in order to build relationships with Italy. This emphasises that the two-way symmetric model and the personal influence model had been widely used by Gaddafi's regime to build long-term relationships with Italian governments. In other words, the two-way symmetric model and the personal influence model were the most applied models used during Gaddafi's era to establish and maintain relationships with Italy. In respect to the personal influence model, this study confirms the hypothesis that is presented by Sriramesh who coined the term "Personal influence model." He says that this model is a "pervasive public relations technique", especially in Far Eastern countries (1992, p. 186). In the same

context, Abdelhay (2014) in his study about the practice of PR in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the UAE asserts that the personal influence model is the most frequently practised model in both KSA and UAE. In addition, it was used in the Saudi and UAE institutions in order to build good relationships with key publics. Moreover, Sriramesh et al., (1999) in their study of three Asian countries, proved that the personal influence model is heavily practised. According to Abdelhay (2014), Diab (2010), Grunig & Hunt (1984), Sriramesh (2002), and Tam (2015), the two-way symmetric model is one of the main theoretical frameworks in the PR field that is used in building relationships, which is confirmed in this study. Likewise, Nage (2005) argues that the two-way symmetric communication model is the only one of the four original models presented by Grunig & Hunt which is actually considered as a dialogue. Hence, the two-way symmetric model and the personal influence model are considered as the best way to build a mutual relationship, which is proved by this study in the Libyan-Italian case.

### **5.3.2. Libyan-Italian ties From a Cultural Perspective**

As discussed earlier in this study, culture has played a very important role in building relationships between Libya and other nations especially Italy because Libya was occupied by Italy for more than three decades and Italian culture affected Libyan culture. It is worth mentioning that despite the brutality of the Italian occupation, the convergence of cultural concepts between Libya and Italy have made Libya's relations with Italy completely different from other European countries. In brief, Gong and his colleagues claim that it cannot be agreed what is a single definition of culture. In other words, culture is considered as a very abstract term that has no consensus on its definition (Gong et al., 2007). However, the concept of culture could be defined as a unified set of norms, customs, attitudes and behaviours, as well as beliefs that are shared by a large group of people which differentiate them from other groups or nations (Hofstede, 2001; Patton, 2002; Twati, 2008).



There have been some calls from scholars in the Arab World that societal institutions such as Universities, Hospitals, Social Institutions, Embassies etc., need to be studied in order to understand their influence on decision-makers in the Arab countries (Abdelgader, 2012; Almutairi, 2013; Diab, 2012; Sabagh & Ghazalla, 1986). Furthermore, this study seeks to identify the role of PR and PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy in light of Libyan culture. Thus, the following sections illustrate the role of culture in establishing Libyan-Italian relationships as described by the participants in this study.

For example, Ambassador 14 stated that:

There is no doubt that the cultural aspect plays a very important role in building relations between countries. In regard to Libyan-Italian relations, the existence of cultural ties between the two countries is one of the main pillars in building relations between them.

In the same line, Prime Minister 1 added that:

Although Libyan-Italian history was very painful, whereby the Italian occupier had executed many civilians in Libya, it could be said that there is a common culture which has helped in building relationships between the two countries. There are many common links between the two countries that do not exist with other European countries such as France, UK, and Germany etc. There is a consensus between Libyans and Italians in several aspects of life such as habits, food, and clothes. For example, there are many Libyans who speak Italian and also know the Italian culture very well, and vice versa. This has strengthened relationships between the two countries in many realms.

Another participant asserted that:

Foreign Minister 11: Cultural elements have been employed by all Italian governments in order to build relations with Libya. Because Italy had occupied Libya for a long time, so Libya in terms of geographical, historical, political and economic perspective as well as the structure of the Libyan tribes, is well known to Italian governments. Our knowledge of the Italian language and culture came about in two ways. Firstly, Libya was an Italian colony. Secondly, many Libyans have studied at Italian universities and institutes. In this regard, it is worth noting that Gaddafi's regime used those who have knowledge of Italian culture to build relations with Italy.

In the same line, another interviewee asserted that:

Ambassador 16: What should be asserted is that Libya and Italy have many common cultural denominators, also the history of Libya is closely interconnected with the history of Italy. For instance, Italian architecture can be seen in many Libyan cities

such as Ajdabia, Benghazi, and Tripoli etc., these common denominators between the two countries are a catalyst in building relations.

In respect of the tools that have been used in order to build relations between the two countries, one of the participants clarified that:

Ambassador 19: Recently, more attention has been paid to the cultural aspect of building relations between Libya and Italy. For instance, Libya has established the Libyan Academy in Italy, aka "the Libyan Cultural Centre in Italy". The main role of this centre is to build relations with Italy based on a cultural understanding between the two countries. The Italian government has founded the Italian Cultural Centre in Libya for the same purpose.

Similarly, one of the participants emphasised that:

Ambassador 13: When I was a Libyan ambassador to Italy, I founded, with my colleagues, the Libyan Cultural Centre in Rome. The aim of establishing this centre in Rome is for it to become another method for communication and building relations between Libyans and Italians to overcome the previous colonial stage. In addition, the centre has sought to teach Arabic to Italians; it has contributed to meetings between intellectuals in both countries. What's more, several historical books and documents relating to the Libyan Jihad, (War of Resistance) during the Italian occupation of Libya have been translated into Italian. What I want to emphasise in this regard is that culture had played an important role in building relations with Italy because the negotiations with the Italian side were led by people who know the language, culture, and Italian politics well.

According to the previous statements, culture has a predominant role in the field of relationship building. More especially, the common cultural denominators between Libya and Italy have helped both countries to build long-term relationships in many fields. Most notably, both countries have depended on the cultural interpreter model in order to build relationships with each other. In summary, the cultural interpreter model is used by some institutions such as embassies or multinational companies which employ people who understand the culture in the country in which they are operating, (Abdelhay, 2014; Diab, 2010; Lyra, 1991). By the same token, Grunig et al., (1995) assert that the cultural interpreter model is used by organisations that do business in another country or seek to build relationships with another country. This requires a person who understands the language, culture, custom, and the environment they operate in. In the same context, Abdelhay (2014) and Diab (2010) assert that the cultural interpreter models is one of the PR techniques that

have been applied in many Arab countries in order to build or maintain bilateral relations with other nations.

This study shows that the cultural interpreter model has been used by both countries through their ambassadors and special envoys etc., in order to build relationships between Libya and Italy. This result is consistent and matches with the findings in Abdelhay's study (2014). He studied PR in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Abdelhay states that the cultural interpreter model is one of the most frequently practised models in both KSA and UAE. Similarly, Kruckeberg (1996) in his study about practising PR models in Arab countries in comparison with the models practised in the USA and Western countries. He asserts that the culture of the Middle East is different from Western culture. Moreover, he emphasises the importance of familiarity with Middle East culture and with Islam in order to practise models of PR in this region.

### **5.3.3. Libyan-Italian ties from an Economic Perspective**

By tracing Libyan-Italian relations during the period of Gaddafi's regime in Libya and for more than four decades, the most important thing that can be noted is that economic factors had played an important role in forming relations between the two countries. It is worth mentioning that despite the long isolation of Gaddafi's regime from the international community, the trade relations between Libya and Italy had not been stopped especially in the field of energy (Ronzitti, 2009). Italy's economic interests in Libya had pushed it to pursue a conciliatory policy with Colonel Gaddafi during his rule in Libya, in which Libya has become an increasingly important energy supplier to EU countries especially to Italy (Crocì & Valigi, 2013). Until the Libyan Revolution in 2011, more than 85 percent of Libya's crude oil exports went to European countries (Al Jazeera, 2011) for more details see the figure (5.3).

Figure 5.3: Share of Libyan Oil and Gas in Imports of Selected EU Countries (2011).

Country	Share of oil imports from Libya (%)	Share of gas imports from Libya (%)
France	10	0.3
Germany	14	-
Italy	32	13
Spain	10	02

Source: (Aljazeera, 2011), Oil is the mainstay of the Libyan economy.

As can be seen from the figure (5.3) among EU countries, Italy is by far the most dependent on Libyan oil and gas. In its foreign policy, Italy often concentrates on economic development in its relations with other countries, especially Mediterranean Basin countries. This could be considered as a key factor in Rome's relations with Tripoli (Mezran & De Maio, 2007). In this regard, Lutterbeck (2009) asserts that Libya's vast energy reserves are considered to be one of the most important elements that drive Italian–Libyan relations. What is worth mentioning in this respect is that, since 1972, 'energy giant' ENI is considered to be the key player in establishing and maintaining Libyan-Italian relations (Mezran & De Maio, 2007). In return, in the last decade of Gaddafi's rule in Libya, his regime had shown a huge interest in investing in Italy's sovereign wealth funds as well as Italian companies such as Unicredit and ENI etc. Economic reforms that Gaddafi's regime made in the beginning of the twenty-first century encouraged foreign companies especially Italian firms to invest in Libya in many fields (AL-haj et al., 2006). In this respect, through the Libyan Central Bank, Libyan Investment Authority and Libyan National Oil & Gas Corporation, Libya had invested in energy, banking, finance, infrastructure, and technology with Italy (Varvelli, 2010). For instance, according to Lombardi, who stated that:

The Libyan Foreign Bank owns 67.5 percent of Banca UBAE SpA, of which slightly less than 11 percent is owned by Italy's largest bank, UniCredit, in which Libya owns 7.5 percent. According to a leaked US diplomatic cable, the Libyan Investment Authority also owns 2 percent of the aerospace and defence company Finmeccanica, 7.5 percent of Turin's Juventus Football Club, and 2 percent of both the car maker FIAT and oil giant ENI (2012, p. 38).

Commercial and diplomatic relations between Libya and Italy reached their peak when the Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and Colonel Gaddafi signed the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation in 2008 at Benghazi, which responded to all Gaddafi's demands related to Italian colonialism (Ronzitti, 2009). Moreover, after the treaty was ratified, Italian companies such as ENI (energy), Ansaldo (rail transport), Impregilo (construction), and Finmeccanica (space and defence) signed new contracts with the Libyan government estimated to be about €4 billion (Crocì & Valigi, 2013). This treaty has helped both countries overcome the disputes caused by the Italian occupation after the long negotiations lasting for a decade, after which both entered a new phase of special and privileged relations in many domains.

As mentioned earlier, the vast majority of participants such as Prime Ministers 1 and 2, Foreign Ministers 7, 10 and 12, and Ambassadors 13, 15, 16, and 19 have agreed on the following points, which are:

- The special economic relations between Libya and Italy are considered to be the mainstay of relations between the two countries;
- The strong economic relations between the both countries helped them to overcome disputes caused by the colonial era and build a new phase of bilateral relations;
- Due to their economic interests, all Italian governments adopted a diplomatic compromise approach to maintaining their relations with Gaddafi's regime;
- The energy giant ENI had played a very important role in building bridges between Italy and Libya during Gaddafi's time, and
- Among EU countries, Italy is considered the primary investor and partner to Libya, especially in the field of oil and gas.

#### **5.4. Public Diplomacy during Gaddafi's era**

Countries around the world through their government leaders, foreign ministers, ambassadors and special envoys have used PD as a tool of communication and a management process to create or maintain long-term relationships with other governments

in order to achieve their national interest (Sondermann et al., 1979). Most notably, the concept of the PD profession has been changed over the last two decades. For instance, historically, PD was used by governments as one-way approaches, a sort of propaganda in order to influence other governments and their citizen as well (Senaratne, 2016). This kind of approach - top-down communication- no longer exists, especially when governments seek to build long-term relationships with other governments. The terror attacks on 9/11/2001 have changed the world in terms of governments' dealings with each other, at the same time this has shown the importance of PD in linking governments to one another in order to reach a point of common understanding among them (Gregory, 2007; Schneider, 2015). Furthermore, we live in the age of globalisation and development technology.

The PD notion has shifted from the traditional diplomacy of one-way communication and propaganda, to modern PD which deals with other governments based on negotiations, dialogues, and understanding other cultures in order to build bilateral relations (Hayes, 2012; Signitzer & Coombs, 1992). In this regard, Nye (2004), who coined the concept of "soft power", believes that contemporary PD is used by governments based on attraction and the understanding of national culture, policies, and values, rather than coercion and the one-way communication method, in order to build relationships among them. It should be mentioned that practising PD differs from one country to another, based on the foreign policy goals and interests of each country. In this respect, PD and its role in establishing Libyan-Italian relations during Gaddafi's era is shown in the following sections as described by the participants.

The role of the PR profession in terms of methods used in building relationships between Libya and Italy over the years of Gaddafi's rule in Libya, especially the last decade of his rule, have been discussed. Likewise, this part of the study endeavours to unveil the role of PD as a tool of relationships building that was used during the Gaddafi period in order to create or reinforce relations with Italy. Since this topic has not been investigated yet in Libya

and Arab countries, there is a need to have 'first-hand knowledge' of the role of PD in building relationships in light of Libyan political, economic and cultural elements. Thus, examples of the role of PD in relationships building are provided according to the participants' experience and knowledge as career diplomats in the following positions: Prime Minister, Foreign Minister or Ambassador. More specifically, based on the participant's point of view, this section discusses the PD profession in terms of: To what extent did PD help Gaddafi's regime in creating relations with Italian governments? In addition, what kind of PD' methods were used to establish ties between both countries?

#### **5.4.1. Public Diplomacy as a Communication Tool**

The researcher asked the participants about their opinions on the role of PD as a communication tool that had been used by Gaddafi's regime in order to build relations with Italian governments. As has been mentioned Gaddafi's regime had been faced with international isolation by the USA and EU. Italian foreign policy is an integral part of EU' policy and also is deeply influenced by US' policy as Italy is a strong ally of America. So, Libyan-Italian relations had deteriorated due to sanctions that had been imposed by the international community. Ronzitti (2009) claims that during the years of international isolation, Libyan-Italian relations were characterised as being shaky and unsteady, but they never ended. Once the sanctions were lifted Gaddafi's regime entered a new era of relationships with Western countries especially Italy, and for the first time both sides signed an official agreement the so-called "Joint Declaration" in 1998. Then after ten years of negotiation both parties signed the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation in 2008 at Benghazi. In this regard, participants describe the role of PD as a communication tool between Libyan and Italian governments in order to build bilateral relations.

For example, one of the interviewees stated that:

Ambassador 14: Italy's economic interests in Libya especially in oil and gas had paved the way for the return of diplomatic relations between the two countries once the sanctions were lifted.

Another interviewee added that:

Ambassador 18: Despite the objection of Colonel Gaddafi and insistence on his demands relating to the period of the Italian occupation of Libya, PD as an official communication tool succeeded to reach a point of understanding with the Italian side in 1998 when both parties signed the Joint Declaration.

Likewise, Prime Minister 1 said that:

Although the Joint Declaration did not include Gaddafi's demands, there is no doubt that PD played a very important role in signing this statement. The Joint Declaration was considered as the first step towards normalising ties between the two countries.

In the same line, another interviewee asserted that:

Prime Minister 3: Indeed, Gaddafi's regime used PD. In the past, Libyan's relations with Italy were strained because of the Italian colonial era. However, in the last ten years of Gaddafi's rule, we witnessed unprecedented diplomatic moves between Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts and this helped in recovering the relationship and building a special partnership between the two countries.

Similarly, Ambassador 19 emphasised that:

Recently, Gaddafi realised the importance of activating the diplomatic role as a tool of communication and this had helped his regime to solve many outstanding issues with the international community such as the murder of the British police officer in 1984, the Lockerbie case in 1988, and UTA flight 772 over Niger in 1989 etc. It should be highlighted that in the Libyan-Italian case, economic relations played a significant role in normalising diplomatic relations between both countries.

A similar view can be seen in a statement by another interviewee:

Ambassador 17: In the late of nineties, Gaddafi had changed his foreign policies and attitudes toward the international community in order to build good relationships with them. In this regard, Gaddafi had used PD with Italian governments in order to build a new era of relationships with Italy as well as the international community. As a result of improved Libyan-Italian relations, Italian diplomats had helped him to solve many of his problems with other countries.

The previous statements have shown that Gaddafi's regime had used PD as a communication tool to build long-term relationships with Italian governments. More specifically, PD as an official communication tool had been employed by both countries in order to overcome all matters that related to the Italian colonial period. In this respect, Lombardi, (2012), Mezran & De Maio, (2007), Varvelli, (2010), emphasise that as a result of the diplomatic efforts that had been made by Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts, both countries had



managed to restore relations through the 'Joint Communiqué' in 1998 as well as the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation in 2008. Both treaties had paved the way for Libya and Italy to enter a new era of partnership in which Italy became the first partner in the EU for Libya in many fields, especially in the sector of oil and gas, after a long period of hostility. Thus, the question that arises is how had PD helped Gaddafi's regime to build relations with Italy?

#### **5.4.2. The Role of Public Diplomacy in Building Relationships between Libya and Italy**

Governmental and nongovernmental organisations have utilized PD as an administrative function in order to build or maintain bilateral relations with other nations as well as their citizens (Snow, 2015). In the same context, Golan & Yang (2015) claim that PD is a very important instrument that has been used by, either governmental or nongovernmental institutions, through dialogue and negotiation in order to reach a point of understanding about their common interests. Furthermore, Leonard et al., (2002) assert that the core of PD is to build relationships between countries (cited in Snow, 2015).

As mentioned earlier, a relational approach has been applied to the field of PR in building relationships between Libya and Italy during Gaddafi's era. Likewise, it has been used in the field of PD in order to explore its role in building relationships between both countries. The rationale behind employing this approach in the field of PD is because it seeks to build or maintain relationships between governments, based on dialogue and two-way communications (Almutairi, 2013; Ferraro, 2015). In this regard, Fitzpatrick (2007) asserts that the relational approach boosts the capacity of governmental and nongovernmental organisations to create or preserve their relationships with their targeted publics. It has implications for organisational behaviour as well as for PD itself in terms of theory and practice. Gaddafi's regime had used PD as a communication tool to build relations with Italy. Hence, the following sections explain, based on participants' perspectives, how PD had

helped Gaddafi's regime to build relations with Italy. In other words, how Gaddafi's regime had applied PD in order to build long-term relationships with Italy.

For example, one of the interviewees stated that:

Prime Minister 1: PD was used by Libyan and Italian governments in order to break the long-standing political stalemate between them through Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministries, Ambassadors, and Special Envoys.

In line with this, another interviewee added that:

Foreign Minister 12: There is no doubt that during the Gaddafi era, PD was the official channel that helped the regime negotiate and communicate with the Italian side. There were joint committees of Libyan and Italian diplomats, which means that all meetings were planned with the Italian side through official diplomatic channels represented by the Foreign Ministries, Embassies, and Special Envoys.

Another similar view can be seen from a statement by Foreign Minister 13 who said that:

In 2000, I was appointed the Foreign Minister of Libya and at that time Libya had a lot of problems with Arab and Western countries alike, such as the Lockerbie case and the aforementioned issues. As a result of these issues, the international community imposed an embargo on Libya for many years. It was necessary for the Gaddafi regime to resolve these issues and the regime was aware that if relations with the USA improve, it will influence the EU countries because they are allies of the USA. When these problems were solved, through diplomatic efforts, Libyan-Italian relations entered a new era of negotiation ending up with the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation in 2008.

With regard to the tools that had been used by Gaddafi's regime and which helped him to restore relations between Libya and Italy after a long time of deterioration and instability.

Foreign Minister 11 said that:

Gaddafi had employed PD by appointing some effective ambassadors and special envoys to Italy who had very good relationships with the Italian side as well as with Colonel Gaddafi. Those diplomats had helped Gaddafi to build special and strong relations with Italian parliamentarians, parties, and politicians.

In a similar vein, Prime Minister 5 asserted that:

In addition to the important role the economic aspect that had played in building relations between Tripoli and Rome, Gaddafi had very good diplomats who spoke Italian fluently and understood Italian culture as well. For instance, Mr. Shalgam who had worked for more than ten years in Rome, was appointed as the Foreign Minister of Libya. Mr. Shalgam had played a very significant role in cementing Libyan-Italian relations.

Similarly, one of the interviewees emphasised that:

Foreign Minister 8: Personal relationships made by the Libyan diplomats, who represented Libya in Italy for many years, with Italian politicians had helped Gaddafi to build relations with Italy. In fact, those diplomats were the ones who had maintained relations between Tripoli and Rome. They were the key players in establishing confidence between Gaddafi and the Italian side because they had special relationships with Gaddafi as well as with the Italian side.

The previous statements of the participants articulate that Gaddafi's regime, during the period of negotiation with Italian diplomats, had used personal relations, through Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers, Ambassadors, and Special envoys, in order to build relationships with Italy. It should be noted that Gaddafi depended on the personal relations (personal influence model) as one of the PR models that are used to build relationships. It could be seen that this model had been used also by Libyan diplomats in the field of PD to create bilateral relations with their Italian counterparts. In other words, the personal influence model had been used during Gaddafi's era through official diplomatic channels such as Foreign Ministry of Libya and the Libyan Embassy in Rome in order to build bridges of trust and co-operation between the two countries. Thus, the next sections clarify which kind of PD approaches Gaddafi's regime used after the personal relationships had succeeded in building trust between the two parties.

#### **5.4.3. Public Diplomacy Approaches**

This part of the study explains which kind of PD approaches had been used by Gaddafi's regime in order to build or maintain Libyan-Italian relations after a long period of international isolation affected relations between both countries negatively. More specifically, the following sections illustrate to what extent the models of PR, either the Grunig & Hunt's four models, or the two international models which have been previously explained, could be applied in the field of PD in order to build relationships. In this respect, participants were asked about how the Gaddafi regime had used PD to build long-term relationships with Italy. In addition, what kind of PD did the Gaddafi regime use to build relationships with Italy?

For instance, one of the interviewees stated that:

Ambassador 20: At the outset of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Libya entered into a new era of relationships with the international community, especially Italy, where relations began to improve between Libya and Italy. Then the two countries had formed committees for negotiation and dialogue in order to reach a solution to outstanding issues between them. On many occasions, Gaddafi had shown his disagreement about what had been reached in order to put more pressure on Italian governments. However, after a long period of dialogue and negotiation, and as a result of common interests, the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation was signed in 2008.

In the same vein, another interviewee added that:

Prime Minister 6: In the last ten years of his rule, Gaddafi had changed his policies and relations with the international community and he had become a partner with Western countries in many aspects. As for Italy, the Gaddafi regime used the method of negotiation, dialogue and two-way communication which had helped to build special relations between the two sides.

Similarly, another participant said that:

Prime Minister 4: Once the international sanctions were lifted, Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts started negotiations about outstanding issues. Economic relations and common interests had smoothed the way between both countries. It is worth mentioning that relations, either diplomatic or economic, had been built based on negotiation, dialogue and mutual benefit between the two sides.

By the same token, another interviewee asserted that:

Ambassador 17: Gaddafi's regime had used many ways to reach Italian governments as well as Italian societies. The previous regime also used modern ways of dealing with Italian diplomats through using dialogue and bilateral communications.

Likewise, Ambassador 18 confirmed that:

It should be emphasised that Libyan-Italian relations had witnessed several stages during the era of Gaddafi. Relations between the two countries during the eighties were completely different from the beginning of the twenty-first century. Lately, mutual communications and dialogue were methods that were followed in order to build long-term relationships between both countries.

Many scholars, either in the field of PR or PD, have called for more empirical studies on PD, based on models and theories of PR, especially in developing countries, in order to know the convergences between the two disciplines as well as to identify their roles in building relationships (e.g. Diab, 2010; Fitzpatrick, 2007; Fitzpatrick et al., 2013; Hayes, 2012;

L'Etang, 2009; Signitzer & Coombs, 1992). In this respect, for instance, Signitzer & Coombs, (1992) and Vanc & Fitzpatrick (2016) urge that more studies should be conducted between both areas in order to be familiar with which concepts link them, especially, in terms of building or maintaining relationships. Moreover, Diab (2010) asserts that there is an absence of studies in the Arab world that have applied PR models to the field of PD. In a similar vein, Hayes (2012) says that more studies that apply PR theories and models in the area of PD, especially in developing countries, are needed.

Responding to this call, this study has linked PR and PD in order to identify their role in building relationships between Libya and Italy. Furthermore, models of PR have been applied to the field of PD to see the similarities between the two disciplines as well as to know to what extent PR models could be applied to the field of PD. Accordingly, as has been articulated by the previous participants' statements, this study shows the PR models could be applied to the field of PD. More specifically, the two-way symmetric model, personal influence model, and cultural interpreter model were the main methods that had been practised by Libyan diplomats during the Gaddafi era in order to build bilateral relations with Italian governments. It is worth mentioning that this study agrees with studies of Abdelhay (2014), Diab (2010), Lyra (1991), Sriramesh (2002) and Tam (2015) about the importance of the two-way symmetric model, personal influence model, and cultural interpreter model in building relationships.

## **5.5. Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed three main subjects, which includes Libya's political, diplomatic and economic developments during the Gaddafi era and its impact on Libyan-Italian relations, PR during Gaddafi's time and its role in building and maintaining ties between both countries, and also PD during the era of Colonel Gaddafi in terms of its role in building relationships. It could be said that during the first three decades of Gaddafi's rule, Libya's relations with Italy were characterised as thorny and unsteady because of the international

isolation that was imposed on the Gaddafi regime, but they never ended. At the outset of the twenty-first century, both countries had entered a new era of negotiation and dialogue, which lasted for a decade. In this respect, this study shows that PR and PD had played a vital role in building relationships between Libya and Italy during the Gaddafi era. Furthermore, it confirms that models of PR could be applied to the field of PD especially, in terms of their role in relationships building. Moreover, in light of Libyan political, economic and cultural variables, the two-way symmetric model, personal influence model, and cultural interpreter model were the main models, either in the field of PR or PD that were practised by Libyan diplomats during the Gaddafi era in order to build long-term relationships with Italian governments.

It should be noted that once Gaddafi and Berlusconi had signed the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation in 2008 both parties enjoyed special and privileged relations in many domains. The strong relationship between the Gaddafi regime and Italy continued until the ‘winds of change’ blew into Libya on 17.2. 2011 (17<sup>th</sup> February Revolution). Thus, the next chapter discusses how the new Libyan governments used PR and PD in order to build or maintain their relations with Italy.

## **Chapter 6: Discussion Chapter: Public Relations and Public Diplomacy post the Gaddafi era**

### **6.1. Introduction**

The previous chapter focussed on participants perspectives on the role of PR and PD in building Libyan-Italian relations during the era of Gaddafi regime. This chapter of the thesis turns our attention to the role of PR and PD in building or maintaining relationships between the new Libyan Leaders (NTC), as well as successive governments and Italy after the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime in 2011. In order to obtain a comparison between the roles of PR and PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy after the Libyan Revolution in 2011, diplomats, who participated in the earlier chapter also contribute to this chapter. The same techniques such as the analytical method, and techniques of thematic analysis, have been applied in this chapter in order to garner information regarding the phenomenon under investigation, based on the participants' experiences, values, and opinions. What's more, during the process of coding the data that was gleaned from participants, I applied the block and file technique, as presented by Grinch (2012) (see Appendix 6 and Appendix 7). By applying these techniques, the role of PR and PD in building or promoting Libyan-Italian relationships during and after the revolution of 2011, can be understood.

Moreover, it is necessary to evaluate relationships between Libya and Italy. In other words, due to political and economic changes that happened in Libya after 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011, to what extent have relationships between Libya and Italy been reliable and valid? With this in mind, the four components of the relationship dimensions, as provided by Hon & Grunig (1999) which include control mutuality, satisfaction, trust, and commitment, will be analysed. The rationale behind applying theses dimensions is to measure and evaluate ties between Libya and Italy as well as to identify to what extent these components can contribute to build or maintain relationships between both countries.

Finally, based on perspectives of participants who have practised both the PR and the PD profession throughout their careers, this chapter discusses the commonalities as well as the differences between PR and PD in terms of their roles in building relationships. Furthermore, it seeks to identify methods that can be used by both fields to establish and reinforce relationships. With regards to Libyan-Italian relations that had been constructed over the last few years, I strive to identify which concept (PR or PD) has been most used by Libyan and Italian diplomats to build relationships between the two countries.

## **6.2. The Development of the Diplomatic–Political Environment post Gaddafi**

During the last years of Gaddafi's rule in Libya, Libyan-Italian relations reached its pinnacle whereby Italy become the first partner of Libya among the European countries in many domains such as political, diplomatic, economic, industrial and military etc,. The special and privileged relations between the Gaddafi regime and Italy continued until the start of 2011 when the 'winds of change' blew into Libya. It is worth mentioning that the Libyan Revolution on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011 against Colonel Gaddafi was part of the so-called 'Arab Spring' in the Middle East and North Africa.

In summary, the story of the Arab Spring is well known. It had begun in late 2010 across many Arab countries (e.g. Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Syria). More specifically, the spark of revolutions in the Arab world started on December 17, 2010, when the youth Tunisian Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire (Al-Rawi, 2014). The wave of enormous demonstrations in these countries had led to overthrow the regimes of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali the president of Tunisia, Hosni Mubarak the president of Egypt, Colonel Gaddafi the leader of "Al-Fateh Revolution 69", and Ali Abdullah Saleh the president of Yemen, while the Syrian uprising caused a civil war which has lasted for more than six years (Kashiam, 2012; Scott-Railton, 2013). Participants in this study assess the consequences of the Arab Spring on these countries and on the whole region. For example:



Foreign Minister 10: It should be realised that although what so-called 'Arab Spring Revolutions' were against totalitarian regimes, these uprisings have left countries in a state of political insecurity, and economic instability, which has also affected their neighbouring countries. For instance, Libya was, especially in the last ten years of Gaddafi's rule, a very stable country in terms of political and economic aspects, and it had a new and special relationships with the international community, particularly Italy.

In the same vein, another interviewee asserted that:

Prime Minister 5: Despite the fact that the Arab Spring Revolutions had helped people to get rid of dictatorships that had ruled them for many decades, it has caused chaos and instability, which we are still suffering from today.

With respect to the Libyan Revolution, as explained in Chapter 2, it was a result of the dictatorship which had lasted for more than four decades. Briefly, at the outset of the Libyan Revolution, the main demands of demonstrations around the country were freedom, social justice, and the peaceful transfer of power, then the demand was raised for the departure of Colonel Gaddafi when his soldiers used weapons to kill Libyans people (Scott-Railton, 2013). The most important thing to mention in this regard is that, ten days after the beginning of the revolution, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2011, opponents of Gaddafi's regime had established the National Transitional Council (NTC) in Benghazi, in order to express their voices, and the values underpinning their cause to the world. The NTC was headed by Mustafa Abdul Jalil the former Justice Minister during the Gaddafi era and it assembled under the national flag, flown during the King Idris al-Senussi era. Most notably, the NTC included about 31 representatives from Libya's municipalities. Membership of the NTC came from former political prisoners, (Islamists), reformist technocrats and former Gaddafi regime officials that had defected to the rebels (Brahimi, 2011). They then formed the NTC Executive Board (government) which was headed by Mahmoud Jibril. Another point to be noted is that given the use of tanks and warplanes by Gaddafi's regime against demonstrators in Benghazi, Tripoli, Ajdabiya, Brega etc, the UN issued Resolution 1973, which was adopted by the Security Council on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2011, in order to protect civilians by "all necessary measures" (Scott-Railton, 2013). Based on this resolution, NATO had intervened to establish a no-fly zone to protect civilians. After eight months, rebels, assisted by NATO

air cover and air strikes, were able to capture Gaddafi and kill him in his hometown of Sirte on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2011 (Wright, 2012). Three days later the President of the NTC announced the liberation of Libya on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2011. After liberation was announced, Libya entered a difficult transition period in order to build a modern democratic country. However, building Libyan institutions still faces a lot of difficulties, because Gaddafi had left the country without a constitution and laws that could be adopted (Abdelgader, 2012).

### **6.3. Libyan-Italian Relations during and after the Period of the National Transitional Council**

After the NTC was established in the first days of the revolution, it had become the only legitimate authority in the country, especially when some countries such France and Qatar had recognised it as the sole representative of Libya. However, Italy's relation with the NTC was not as clear as that of France and Qatar who had recognised the NTC from the outset. Thus, this part clarifies Italy's relation with the NTC, reinforced by the views of Libyan diplomats who had played a key role in establishing the NTC. Furthermore, it seeks to find out why Italy delayed recognition of the NTC as the legitimate authority in the country, as well as what had pushed Italy (Berlusconi), to abandon Gaddafi and recognise the NTC as the legitimate representative voice of Libya, announcing an end to the special relationship between Italy and Colonel Gaddafi which characterised the last years of Gaddafi's rule. Moreover, the next pages examine how new Libyan leaders used PR and PD in order to build and maintain Libyan relationships with Italy under these new circumstances.

Since the outset of the Libyan revolution, Italy's attitude towards the uprising was characterised by hesitation and lack of clarity. One can ask why was there this hesitation from Berlusconi's government during the beginning of the Libyan revolution. As argued by Mezran & De Maio (2007), Italy's ties with other countries, particularly Mediterranean Basin countries, are always based on economic development and commercial relationships. Furthermore, all Italian governments have adopted a conciliatory policy in their dealings

with Libyan governments in order to assure the continuation of their economic interests in Libya especially in the field of oil and gas (Crocì & Valigi, 2013). Thus, unsurprisingly, Berlusconi's government delayed recognising the NTC, because the Italian government, first and foremost, had sought to preserve its interest in Libya. It did not know the new Libyan leaders, and it feared Gaddafi regaining Libya (Lombardi, 2012). With regards to Italian reluctance to deal or recognise the NTC from the outset interviewees articulated that:

Ambassador 18: Strong personal relationships between the Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and Colonel Gaddafi were one of the reasons that delayed Italy's recognition of the NTC from the beginning of its formation. For example, just a few months before the Libyan revolution, Gaddafi was lavishly welcomed in Rome to celebrate the second anniversary of the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Co-operation.

In the same line, another participant asserted that:

Foreign Minister 11: Italy did not give up Gaddafi easily. For example, in the meeting "Contact Group" about Libya on 29<sup>th</sup>, March 2011, in London, Italy had not recognised the NTC yet, in addition, it had tried to urge countries not to move forward to recognise and support the NTC. Because of Italy's considerable economic interests in Libya.

Likewise, another interviewee declared that:

Ambassador 14: It can be said that Berlusconi's government was surprised by the revolution of February 17<sup>th</sup>, and this is what had pushed them not to take a clear decision from the outset of the uprising for fear of damaging their interests in Libya as well as due to the special relationship between Gaddafi and Berlusconi.

In addition to the personal relationship between the two leaders, according to the participants such as (Prime Minister 1, Prime Minister 3, Prime Minister 6, Foreign Minister 7, Foreign Minister 10, Foreign Minister 12, Ambassador 16 and Ambassador 19 etc.,) who all offer some reasons behind Berlusconi's government's delay in recognising the NTC from the outset. This can be summarised as follows:

- Colonial Past: The ancient colonial legacy is always taken into consideration by all Italian governments in their relations with Libya.
- Economic Relations: Italy has become the first partner for Libya in many aspects, most importantly in the field of energy. For instance, the Libyan Ambassador to Rome says that during the first week of the Libyan Revolution the Italian stock market fell by 5%. This shows the level of economic inter-dependence.
- Illegal Immigration: Alongside economic relations, the illegal immigration issue is considered as one of the key elements of Libyan-Italian relations, both during and after the Gaddafi era. For example, in 2010, as a result of signing the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation the number of illegal immigrants had

declined by 98 % from 37,000 in 2008 to 405 in 2010 (Lombardi, 2012). Conversely, the number of illegal immigrants has increased rapidly after the revolution of 2011. According to the Libyan Ambassador to Rome, the number reached in 2016 was more than 250,000.

On 4<sup>th</sup> April 2011, after weeks of hesitation and confusion, Berlusconi's Italy was the third country after France and Qatar to announce its full recognition of the NTC. It announced that it had abandoned its special relationships with Colonel Gaddafi, (Crocì & Valigi, 2013). Once the Italian government had shifted its attitude towards the NTC and recognised it as the sole representative of Libya, Italy played a central role in supporting the NTC at the international level as well as giving humanitarian aid to the Libyan people during the uprising. With respect to the Italian role in supporting the NTC, one of the participants stated that:

Foreign Minister 11: In the first week of April, the Italian role had completely changed towards the NTC, and it had become an active player in encouraging the recognition of the NTC at the international level.

A similar view can be seen in a statement by another interviewee:

Foreign Minister 8: Once Italy had recognised the NTC as the legitimate authority in Libya, the Italian role, either at a political or humanitarian level, cannot be denied. For instance, Italy played a key role in establishing the so-called "Libya Contact Group" which is an international umbrella organisation that was established in order to support the NTC as the sole legitimate body in Libya.

Emphasising the depth of Libyan-Italian relations as well as the importance of the Italian role in supporting the NTC, the first trip abroad of the president of the NTC Mustafa Abdul Jalil was to Rome (Crocì & Valigi, 2013). With regards to this visit, one of the participants commented that:

Prime Minister 3: On 12<sup>th</sup> April, the President of the NTC visited Italy for his first trip outside of the country. It was a planned trip in order to affirm the special relationship between Libya and Italy and to reassure the Italian side that the NTC' intended to honour all previous agreements that had been signed by both parties during the Gaddafi era, especially in the field of energy.

One can wonder why Berlusconi's government abandoned Gaddafi and declared its support and recognition of the NTC as the sole legitimate authority in the country. I asked the participants about the reasons that had pushed Berlusconi's government to change its attitude

and to announce its support for the NTC. The participants such as (Prime Minister 1, Prime Minister 3, Prime Minister 6, Foreign Minister 7, Foreign Minister 10, Foreign Minister 12, Ambassador 16 and Ambassador 19 etc.,) asserted that:

- Berlusconi's government had realised that Gaddafi regime no longer had control over the country;
- To preserve its special economic relations constructed over the last decade as well as for national security remembering that the Italian shore is close to Libya;
- The Anglo-French intervention in the Libyan revolution from its outset, and
- The United States had exercised pressure on Italy due to their special relationship. The United States supported the Anglo-French resolution, No 1973, at the Security Council for intervention In Libya.

After the liberation of the country was announced on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2011, Italy, as usual, had become a key player in the Libyan scene in order to maintain its interests in Libya, both economic and security interests. It is worth mentioning that during the first three years of the revolution the countries had witnessed a peaceful transition of power through the first election that took place in the country in 2012 when the Libyan people had elected the General National Congress (GNC) as the first parliament after the revolution. Then in 2014, the country had witnessed the election of the House of Representatives, (HoR). However, since 2014 the country has experienced political division and a civil war that has compromised the stability of the country. In order to bring political, economic stability and security to the country and its neighbouring countries, the UN held a dialogue between political rivals. It resulted in the Government of National Accord, (GNA), late in 2015. With this in mind, I asked the participants about the consequences of the Libyan revolution on Libyan-Italian relations. In other words, to what extent political and economic changes have affected the relations between the two countries? In this respect, interviewees articulated that:

Foreign Minister 10: There is no doubt that political, economic and security circumstances after the revolution have affected ties between Libya and Italy because key political actors have been changed. Before the revolution, Libya was a stable country and on its way to growth, especially from an economic and security perspective.

Another interviewee added that:

Foreign Minister 7: In spite of the political and security instability in the country, relations between the two countries are still strong, because both countries are linked by political, economic, historical, cultural and security aspects.

In the same vein, another interviewee stated that:

Ambassador 19: The current situation affects Libya internally as a result of the political divisions, and it has not affected relationships with Italy. For instance, from a political perspective, there are no disputes between the two countries, and also economic relations between them are still good and Italy is still the first partner of Libya.

Likewise, another interviewee asserted that:

Ambassador 17: The current political situation has shown the importance of Libya to Italy especially in security and economic fields. So, all Italian governments have given special attention to the Libyan case, either in the EU or in international meetings. This confirms the depth of the relationship between the two countries, on one hand, to preserve its economic interests in Libya, on the other hand for security reasons.

The previous statement was echoed by:

Prime Minister 6: The lack of stability in Libya after 2011 has affected the development of relations between Libya and Italy, but it has not affected the nature of Libyan-Italian relations. The diplomatic and economic relationships are still special and privileged because both countries share many common interests.

Accordingly, after many years of a special friendship between Gaddafi and Berlusconi, ultimately Berlusconi's government announced that it had abandoned Gaddafi and recognised the NTC as the sole legitimate authority in the country at the outset of the Libyan revolution in 2011. Furthermore, despite the absence of political and security stability in Libya after the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime in 2011, relations between Libya and Italy were still special and privileged, according to all participants in this study. The question that arises is to what extent PR and PD have been used, whether during the establishment of the NTC or by successive governments after 2011, in order to build or maintain relationships with Italy? In other words, how have new Libyan Leaders used PR and PD to create or preserve relations between both countries under these circumstances? The following pages explain the role of PR and PD in building or maintaining Libyan-Italian ties after the fall of Colonel Gaddafi's regime.

#### **6.4. Public Relations after the fall of the Gaddafi Regime in 2011**

The rapid changes and developments within the political, diplomatic, and economic environment that have happened in the last few years across the Arab world are clearly due to the widespread uprisings against Arab dictatorships in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya and some other countries (Al-Rawi, 2015). Libya is one of those countries that are still suffering from the consequences of its revolution of 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011 which led to overthrow the regime of Colonel Gaddafi who had ruled the country for more than four decades. After the revolution, Libya has sought to build its relations with other countries, especially Italy, based on mutual respect, good-neighbourly ties, and mutually beneficial relationships.

Hence, the PR profession was applied as a communication tool during the Gaddafi era in order to fulfil its role in building relationships between the Gaddafi regime and Italy. Likewise, this part of the study seeks to explore the role of PR in building or maintaining Libya's relations with Italy after the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime. The Libyan environment changed totally in terms of political, economic, diplomatic systems after the Gaddafi regime fell in 2011. As has been stated in this chapter, at the outset of the Libyan revolution, Italian policy towards the revolution was not a clear, some might say they were against it. At the beginning of the revolution, Italy was reluctant to deal with Libya's new leaders (NTC), moreover, it had urged its allies not to recognise or even support the NTC. Yet, Italy changed its attitude and policy towards the NTC. In this regard, I asked Libyan and Italian diplomats about the role of PR, during the establishment of the NTC or by successive governments after 2011, in creating or preserving Libyan-Italian ties. In other words, to what extent was PR used after the fall of Gaddafi's regime in order to build or maintain relationships with Italy, despite the special and strong relations between Libya (Gaddafi) and Italy (Berlusconi) during the last years of Gaddafi's rule in Libya? Participants expressed their views as follows:

For example, Ambassador 14 said that:

In the first weeks of the revolution, Italy's policy was hesitant, and before announcing its recognition of the NTC, it was in touch with the Gaddafi regime. Yet, members of the NTC had succeeded in employing PR in order to build bridges and win trust with Italy.

Another interviewee stated that:

Foreign Minister 11: At the outset of the revolution, Italy feared for its interests in Libya especially after the rapid Anglo-French intervention in Libya. However, the new Libyan leaders during the revolution used PR tools in order to reassure the Italian side about previous economic agreements, especially with ENI in the field of energy, as well as other agreements.

A similar view can be seen in a statement by another participant:

Ambassador 19: During the first weeks of the revolution, there were no formal contacts between Italy and the NTC and also at that time, Italy was sceptical about its future relations and interests with Libya post-Gaddafi. In this respect, PR was used by the NTC leaders in order to confirm their commitment to all previous agreements with Italy.

Similarly, another interviewee asserted that:

Prime Minister 2: It should be noted that Italy has many of interests in Libya most importantly in the energy field. So, the role of PR during the revolution was entirely devoted to showing the commitment of NTC to Italy's interests in Libya and the importance of the relationships between both countries.

Contemporary institutions, either governmental or non-governmental, seek an approach that helps them to build long-term relationships with each other as well as with their target audiences (Kirat, 2005). In this respect, many studies have proved that PR is a very important tool -a management function- that has been used, through dialogue, and mutual communication, in order to build long-term relationships between an institution and its public as well as among institutions themselves (e.g. Abdelhay, 2014; Almutairi, 2013; Diab, 2010; Nkana, 2017; Taylor, 2000; Theunissen & Sissons 2017). For instance, Nkana (2017) argues that PR is considered to be an important communication tool that has been used by many institutions in order to share understanding and build relationships with other institutions as well as their various audiences. In the same vein, Grunig et al., (2002) show that PR as one of the main management functions always seeks to establish mutually beneficial relationships among institutions in order to achieve their objectives. According to Cutlip et al., (2000), PR is "the management function that identifies, establishes, and



maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organisation and the various publics on whom its success or failure depends” (p. 6). By the same token, Taylor (2000) emphasises that PR is a strategic communication tool that helps organisations to build or maintain long-term relationships with other organisations as well as with their key publics that have an effect on organisational aims.

Accordingly, participant’s narratives in this study assert that PR was used in order to build long-term relationships between Libya and Italy during the era of Gaddafi, and after the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime in 2011. By utilizing PR as a tool of communication, the Gaddafi regime succeeded in entering a new era of relationships with Italy. For instance,

Ambassador 18: Yes, indeed, the Libyan Embassy in Rome represents the Libyan state, yet it locates and works in a different environment. Therefore, in order to succeed in your mission, you have to understand the environment in which you work well, also you need to create PR networks in the country that you work in. Gaddafi's regime had succeeded in creating PR networks with Italian opinion leaders such as politicians, intellectuals and civil society institutions etc.

In the same vein, another interviewee stated that:

Prime Minister 6: As a result of the diplomatic isolation that was imposed on the Gaddafi regime by the international community, Gaddafi succeeded in employing PR to build relations with Italy.

After a long period of hostility with Italy, due to the Italian's 1911–42/43 colonisation of Libya, through dialogue, negotiations, and two-way communication, both countries were able to overcome all issues that related to the colonial period. In this regard, participants emphasise that common interests between Tripoli and Rome had helped both countries to reach a point of understanding about disputes concerning the colonial era. More precisely, PR conduits such as the ENI Company, UniCredit Bank, The Libyan Central Bank, the Libyan Investment Authority and the Libyan National Oil & Gas Corporation etc, had paved the way between Libya and Italy towards special bilateral relations. In this respect, one of the interviewees stated that:

Prime Minister 1: What should be emphasised is that PR cannot be effective unless there is a common interest between two parties. In the Libyan- Italian case, the common interests already existed. Gaddafi's interest was to return to the international arena, and Italy played a very important role in this regard, and also Italy's motive was to ensure their economic interest in the field of oil and gas as well as to reach a point of understanding about disputes concerning the colonial era. Based on these common interests, PR was employed to establish relations between the two countries.

Another interviewee added that:

Foreign Minister 11: Gaddafi's regime had built multi-faceted PR with Italian economic institutions, especially with the ENI Company, because of its economic interests in Libya, where it had worked on the one hand to bring the views closer between the two countries and to defend Gaddafi in Italy on the other hand. ENI had played a great role in weaving relations between Libya and Italy.

Likewise, PR has been used by new Libyan leaders (NTC) in order to build trust between Libya and Italy after the Gaddafi regime fell in 2011 especially during the stage which saw the establishment of the NTC. Furthermore, due to the reluctance of Berlusconi's government to deal with the NTC from the outset, PR was devoted to establishing the commitment of the NTC to all previous agreements with Italy especially in the field of oil and gas.

Regarding the role of PR after the fall of the Gaddafi regime and the liberation of the country, its main role was embodied in maintaining the on-going strong and privileged relationships that had been constructed over the last few years, according to the vast majority of the participants. Thus, as has been proved by many PR scholars, relationship-building is the core of PR (e.g. Botan & Taylor, 2004; Ferraro, 2015; Ki et al., 2015; Ledingham, 2003). This study also confirms that building relationships is a central role for PR.

With regards to the approaches that have been used after the revolution of 17<sup>th</sup> 2011, the following pages explain models and tools that have been applied in order to build or maintain Libyan-Italian relations after Gaddafi's regime fell in 2011.

#### **6.4.1. Public Relations Approaches**

New Libyan leaders have succeeded in employing PR in order to build trust with Italy, especially during the first weeks of the Libyan revolution. Hence, the next sections analyse approaches that have been applied by Libyan and Italian diplomats to foster the special relationships that were constructed over the last years between Libya and Italy. In this respect, it should be clarified that the PR profession and its approaches, after the revolution 2011, are applied in order to maintain and promote Libyan-Italian ties not to rebuild the relations between them. There was unanimity among participants that the relationship between Libya and Italy was not lost after Gaddafi's regime fell in 2011 so that there was no need to be rebuilt it.

For example, one of the interviewees clarified that:

Ambassador 19: It should be mentioned that the relationship between Libya and Italy, after the revolution, did not collapse in order for us to rebuild it again. The ties between both countries are very good, and the role of PR is to preserve it.

Similarly, Prime Minister 1 added that:

After the revolution, it could be said that the relations between both countries are framed by the treaty of 2008. So, the role of PR is to maintain on-going relations between Tripoli and Rome as well as to revive this treaty.

I asked the participants about which PR models have been applied to build trust and foster relationships between Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts. In summary, as earlier explained, PR models that are applied in this study are: Grunig & Hunt's (1984), four public relations models, which are; press agency/public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical models. Furthermore, the two international models (personal influence and cultural interpreter models) are utilised as well. In light of the rapid changes and developments within Libya's political, diplomatic and economic environment that have happened after the overthrow of the regime of Colonel Gaddafi, any of these models have been used to promote Libyan-Italian relations. In this regard, interviewees clarified that:

Ambassador 14: Despite Italian reluctance at the beginning of the revolution, Italy abandoned Gaddafi a few weeks later. In this respect, personal relations and personal

influence was exerted by the Libyan Representative to the UN during the revolution, and he was the Libyan Ambassador to Rome for more than ten years and also the Libyan Foreign Minister, this helped to cultivate confidence in both countries.

Likewise, Ambassador 19: added that:

By good fortune, Mr. Abdel-Rahman Shalgam defected to the revolution from its outset. Mr. Shalgam is considered as the Godfather of Libyan-Italian relations because he had spent more than ten years in Italy as the Libyan Ambassador to Rome. He understands Italian culture well and he has very good personal relations with Italian politicians, diplomats, Italian official institutions, and civil institutions which have helped in building trust between the countries.

In the same context, another interviewee asserted that:

Prime Minister 2: At the outset of the revolution, the Libyan Ambassador who defected to the revolution had played an important role in convincing the Italian side to support the revolution. For instance, there was hesitation from Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, but due to the relationship between the Libyan ambassador and the Italian Head of State at that time, he managed to gain Italy's support and then its recognition of the NTC as the legitimate body controlling the country.

Furthermore, the Godfather of Libyan-Italian relations who played a very significant role in weaving ties between the two countries both during Gaddafi's era and after, asserted that:

Ambassador 7: In spite of the special relations between Gaddafi and Berlusconi, we managed to convince Italian diplomats and official institutions to exert pressure on Berlusconi's government in order to recognise the NTC as the sole legitimate authority. Furthermore, I would confirm that relations between the two countries in terms of economic, political, and diplomatic relations were still special and strong.

With regards to the models of PR that have been used to maintain Libyan-Italian ties after the liberation of the country on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2011, the vast majority of participants emphasise that dialogue, negotiations, and active communication are the approaches that have been applied in order to promote ties between the countries. They assert that Libyan-Italian relations stretch back many decades to include historical, political, economic and cultural aspects as well the importance of the geographical dimension.

For example, Ambassador 20 stated that:

In fact, after the revolution, Libyan-Italian relations did not start from square one. Both countries have signed many agreements regarding different aspects, most notably, the treaty of 2008. It is worth mentioning that Italian-Libyan relations have not changed despite all the circumstances following 2011. Negotiations and two-way communication are used to foster the ties between us.

In the same line, another interviewee added that:

Prime Minister 1: Libyan-Italian relations are distinct and the reference framework of the relationship between both parties is now the treaty of 2008. The role of PR is devoted to re-activating the treaty in all aspects through dialogue and negotiations.

Similarly, Prime Minister 6 asserted that:

In fact, Libyan-Italian relations, even after the revolution of 17<sup>th</sup> February, are still strong and privileged, and the role of successive governments after the revolution is to maintain these relations based on two-way communications and continuing negotiation.

Despite the fact that PR models have been criticised by “critical and postmodern scholars”, as described by Grunig (2006), these models still dominate the field of PR in terms of theory and practice. In addition, they have been widely applied in many developed and developing countries alike. For instance, Abdelhay's study (2014), which is about the practising of public relations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the UAE, shows that PR practitioners in those countries tend to practise the four models of public relations, press agency/public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical models. By the same token, Grunig et al., (1995) in their study referring to what extent PR models could be practised in Greece, India, and Taiwan, assert that the four models of PR, were practised in these countries. In her study about PR practice in Greece, Lyra (1991) found the four PR models were practised in Greek institutions, however, the press agency model was the most practised model. Similarly, in their study about PR practice in three Asian countries, India, Japan, and South Korea, Sriramesh et al., (1999) revealed that the press agency/publicity model was the most used model in these three countries. Likewise, another study conducted in Bulgaria by Karadjov et al., (2000) reached the same conclusion, and so it is the publicity model that was most used rather than the other models of PR such as such as the two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical methods. In contrast to this, some studies have not found a link between PR models. For example, an empirical study of PR practitioners in South Africa, which was conducted by Holtzhausen & Petersen (2003) found that PR practitioners in South Africa established their own models of practice based on environmental variables, for

example, culture, economy, and politics in their institutions. In a similar vein, Bardhan (2003) pointed out that the practice of PR in Indian institutions is influenced by Indian values of semi-socialism and bureaucracy rather than PR models.

It is worth mentioning that PR practice should be linked with the nature of countries whether developed or developing, in order to increase an awareness of the PR profession in terms of theory and practice (Sriramesh, 1996). In other words, to what extent do some environmental elements such as political, cultural, and economic aspects affect the practice of PR from one country to another? Many studies have confirmed the importance of studying the impact of the environmental elements on practising the PR profession and its models (e.g. Culbertson & Chen, 1996; Sriramesh et al., 1999; Vercic et al., 1996). In the same context, Sriramesh & Vercic (2001) argue that models of PR are hampered by a relative lack of knowing how it is practised in other countries, especially developing countries. Furthermore, they see a need to conduct international studies in order to reveal the influence of environmental elements on PR practice. Similarly, Hayes (2012) states that the world's different political systems and cultures should be studied and linked to the field of PR in order to find out their influence on the PR profession.

Accordingly, this study has investigated the role of PR and PD in building Libyan-Italian ties before and after the Gaddafi era, in the light of Libyan environmental variables, such as political systems, cultural, and economic factors, and how they reflect on the performance of PR and PD. Thus, based on participant' narratives, PR is a very important tool that has been used over the last few decades in order to build and maintain Libyan-Italian relations. As has been mentioned, Libyan-Italian ties, either during or post the period of Gaddafi, have witnessed many developments and changes in which PR is being employed in order to pave the way between Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts to build or maintain ties between them. Furthermore, PR models are applied by Libyan and Italian diplomats in order to establish long-term relationships between both countries. In other words, this study shows

that all Libyan and Italian diplomats who have played a significant role in building and maintaining relationships between the countries, are aware of Grunig & Hunt's four models and also the two international models (personal influence and cultural interpreter models). However, during the Gaddafi era, the two-way symmetric model, cultural interpreter model, and the personal influence model had been widely used by Gaddafi's regime to build long-term relationships with Italian governments. By the same token, the three aforementioned models have been extensively applied after the revolution of 17<sup>th</sup> February by all Libyan governments in order to maintain and foster the relationship between the two countries that have been constructed over the past decades.

What has been made clear by this study is that the two-way symmetrical model, cultural interpreter model, and the personal influence model are the most practised models that have been used in order to build and promote Libyan-Italian relations, both during and after the Gaddafi era. Furthermore, these models are considered to be the most appropriate models that can be used in order to build and maintain long-term relationships, rather than other PR models such as the publicity model and the public information model. It is interesting to note that a study conducted in Taiwan by Huang (2000) revealed that the four PR models were practised in the country, however, the use of these models changed after the regime toppled. For instance, Huang's study shows that during the period of the authoritarian regime the press agency/publicity field was the most practised model between the four models of PR; the two-way asymmetrical model and the public information model were used when martial law was lifted in the country. In contrast to the previous study, this study reveals that the two-way symmetrical model, cultural interpreter model, and the personal influence model have been practised equally during the era of Gaddafi as well as after the Libyan revolution in 2011. For example, during the Gaddafi era, these models were used in order to build long-term relationships between Libya and Italy. While, after the Libyan revolution, it has been applied to preserve and promote the special and privileged relationship.

Hayes (2012) asserts that in contemporary societies propaganda no longer works, so more open, dialogic and authentic communication approaches are the most practised models. By the same token, Gregory (2007) and Schneider (2015) argue that the world has changed, especially after the terror attacks on 9/11/2001, in terms of the ways governments deal with each other. It has pushed governments to use dialogue, negotiations, and active communication in order to build long-term relationships. Hence, top-down communication (one-way communication) no longer exists, especially when governments seek to build or maintain their ties with other governments, which has been evident from this study in terms of the role of dialogue, negotiations, and two-way communication in building and maintaining Libyan-Italian relations.

#### **6.5. The Role of Public Diplomacy in building Libyan-Italian Relationships during and after the Revolution of 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011**

During the era of Colonel Gaddafi, especially in the last ten years of his rule, PD as an official communication tool played a pivotal role in building Libyan-Italian relations. More precisely, at the outset of the twenty first century, and after sanctions were lifted on Gaddafi's regime, Gaddafi's policy was changed towards the international community, Libya and Italy entered into official negotiations which lasted for more than ten years. These started in 1998 when both parties signed the so-called "Joint Declaration". Then both countries entered a new era of relationship by signing the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation in 2008. As mentioned earlier, the Libyan outlook has changed in terms of political, diplomatic, and economic aspects because of the so-called Arab Spring that led to the overthrow of four Arab regimes, Gaddafi's regime was one of them.

Although special relations between the Gaddafi regime and Italy had developed over the previous decade, the Berlusconi government abandoned Gaddafi and announced its recognition of the NTC as the legitimate authority in the country. This was due to the importance of PD as an official tool that has been used by many governments in order to



build and maintain relationships with other countries (Golan, 2015; Snow, 2015). This part of the study seeks to unveil the role of PD as an official communication tool that has been used by the new Libyan leaders (NTC) as well as successive governments to build or preserve the ties between both countries after the Libyan revolution that led to the fall of the regime of Colonel Gaddafi in 2011. In other words, as PD was applied during the Gaddafi era in order to find out its role in building long-term relationships between Libya and Italy, the following sections investigate how new Libyan leaders have applied PD in order to establish or foster ties with their Italian counterparts. In this respect, I asked the participants: what is the importance of PD as an official communication tool after the revolution in 2011? To what extent has PD been used in order to establish or reinforce relations between Libyan and Italian diplomats?

With regards to the role of PD during the establishment of the NTC. Interviewees clarified that:

Prime Minister 3: The NTC had succeeded in employing PD as a communication tool through diplomats who have extensive diplomatic experience and good relations with Italian diplomats. Those diplomats, dissidents in the Gaddafi regime, used their connections in order to obtain recognition for the NTC.

Another interviewee added that:

Foreign Minister 8: The Libyan Ambassador to Rome was one of the diplomats who defected from the Gaddafi regime. We benefited from his relations with Italian diplomats. This helped Italy to declare its recognition of the NTC.

In the same line, another interviewee stated that:

Ambassador 13: As a result of the active role of PD during the establishment of the NTC, we managed to get the recognition of many countries before the fall of Gaddafi's regime despite Gaddafi being still in control of many parts of Libya at the time.

It is worth mentioning that there was unanimity among participants that despite Gaddafi's regime falling in 2011, Libyan-Italian relations have not been affected and are still very strong. In addition, they emphasise that the ties between the countries are framed by political,

economic and historical, and geographical aspects. In this regard, for instance, one of the interviewees (Foreign Minister 7) stated that:

- Regardless of the fact that Italy was the colonial overlord, Italy is the closest European country to Libya according to the common historical heritage between the two countries.
- From an economic perspective, Italy is the first partner of Libya.
- From a political perspective, based on Italy's a pivotal role in the EU, Italy always supports Libyan relations with the EU and maintains them.

A similar view can be seen from a statement by Prime Minister 1 who said that:

Despite the political changes that have happened in Libya after 2011 and the multiplicity of governments, the relationship has not been cut or affected between the two countries. Diplomacy efforts have been employed in preserving Libyan-Italian relations and reaffirming the depth of the relationship. For example, during the revolution, the Libyan Ambassador in Rome was continuing contact with Italian ministers.

In line with last view, another interviewee added that:

Ambassador 19: Relations between the two countries have remained unchanged despite the departure of Gaddafi's regime in 2011. In this regard, key diplomatic players such as foreign ministers and ambassadors are the main tools for the implementation of what has been agreed upon between both countries, especially as both countries have signed many agreements the most important being the treaty of 2008.

Accordingly, PD as an official communication tool has been applied by all Libyan governments after the revolution, mainly to build trust and to maintain relations that have been constructed over the last view years. Although practising PD differs from one country to another based on the foreign policy goals and interests of each country, many studies have shown the importance of PD in building relationships between nations. For instance, as argued by Golan & Yang (2015) and Hayes (2012), modern PD has been used by governments as a channel of communication and negotiation in order to build long-term relationships. It should be clarified that modern PD means building relationships between governments based on negotiations, dialogue, and mutual communication. Unlike traditional diplomacy, contemporary PD is practised by governments based on understanding other nations' cultures and values, the "soft power approach," (Golan, 2015; Nye, 2004). By the

same token, Yun (2012) claims that modern PD has been used by governmental and non-government institutions to build long-term relationships. Furthermore, Golan (2015) asserts that contemporary PD uses a soft power approach, as described by Nye, as a key element in building bilateral relations between nations as well as between people.

What has been made clear by this study is that PD as an official tool has been used, whether during Gaddafi era or after the revolution 2011, in order to build long-term relationships with Italian governments. More specifically, as noted earlier the Gaddafi regime had faced international isolation for many years, which affected its relations with many countries especially Italy, who considered Libya as its biggest supplier of oil and gas. Given the importance of Italy's economic interests in Libya, after the sanctions were lifted both countries entered into negotiations which lasted for more than ten years. In this regard, according to Lombardi (2012), Mezran & De Maio (2007) and Varvelli, (2010), who claim that due to diplomatic efforts through negotiations and dialogue for more than ten years both parties had succeeded to normalise relations between Rome and Tripoli. PD as a communication tool was used by the Gaddafi regime by diplomats who represented Libya in Italy for several years and they spoke Italian and understood the culture. Gaddafi had employed those diplomats in order to pave the way for his regime to create strong ties with Italian diplomats who played a significant role in returning Gaddafi's regime to the international community. Gaddafi managed to forge special relations with many Italian politicians, especially the former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, these continued until the revolution of 2011. On the other hand, after the revolution, Libyan governments have succeeded in applying PD in order to build trust between Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts. Furthermore, after the revolution, the main role of PD is devoted to preserving relations between the two countries. In this regard, the vast majority of the participants asserted that despite the political changes after 2011, relations between both countries have remained unchanged. Hence, the question that arises is what kind of PD

approaches that have been used by Libyan governments in order to build trust and promote ties between the countries?

### **6.5.1. Public Diplomacy Approaches**

As has been made clear by this study, dialogue, negotiations, and bilateral communication were the most practised PD approaches during the era of Colonel Gaddafi which helped Libya and Italy to build long-term relationships. In other words, Libyan and Italian diplomats had employed PR models, particularly, the two-way symmetrical model, personal influence model, and cultural interpreter model in order to create bonds between the two countries. During and after the revolution, the role of PD as a communication tool was applied in order to maintain relations between Libya and Italy. So, this part of the study seeks to explain which kind of PD approaches have been used after the Libyan revolution to preserve Libyan-Italian relations. More specifically, to what extent the models of PR, as earlier explained, could be applied in the field of PD in order to maintain relationships between Libya and Italy. With regards to approaches that have been used by Libyan and Italian diplomats to build trust and maintain relations between the two countries, these could be inferred from the following sections.

According to Libyan and Italian diplomats who participated in this study, after several years of negotiations between Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts relations between both countries have become special and privileged in many aspects. Furthermore, they emphasised that due to the stability of relations, especially economic and diplomatic relations, both countries have used dialogue and negotiations in order to develop and preserve the status quo.

For example, Ambassador 13 stated that:

I would confirm that the treaty of 2008 is the reference framework for Libyan-Italian relations. Due to common interests between the two countries, two-way communication has been used by Libyan and Italian diplomats to maintain their ties.

Another example, Ambassador 15 added that:

Negotiation, dialogue, and communication in two directions are the approaches that are used by Libyan and Italian diplomats after the revolution of 2011 because relations between the two countries are politically and economically stable.

In the same vein, one of the participants said that:

Prime Minister 3: Libyan-Italian relations are more clear and stable and are based on mutual respect and common interests between the two countries, so negotiations are employed in order to preserve and develop ties between Tripoli and Rome.

In the same context, another interviewee asserted that:

Prime Minister 4: Libyan-Italian relations are fairly stable and the language of dialogue, understanding and bilateral relations are the dominant patterns between both countries because both parties need each other, which has strengthened ties and helped in building long-term relations.

According to participants' narratives all Libyan and Italian governments following the overthrow of the regime of Colonel Gaddafi in 2011, have used dialogue, negotiations, and two-way communication in order to maintain relations between Libya and Italy. Interestingly, the same approaches were used by the Gaddafi regime in order to build long-term relationships with Italy. Furthermore, during the era of Colonel Gaddafi, PR models especially the two-way symmetrical model, personal influence model, and cultural interpreter model were utilised by Libyan and Italian diplomats in order to build bilateral relations between both countries. Likewise, after the revolution 2011, Libyan and Italian diplomats have applied PR models, specifically the two-way symmetrical model, personal influence model, and cultural interpreter model, in the field of PD to preserve relations that have been constructed over the last few years. Thus, this study shows that PR models could be applied in the field of PD in order to build relationships. In other words, in the Libyan-Italian case, participants state that the two-way symmetrical model, personal influence model, and cultural interpreter model, whether during or after the era of Gaddafi, have been used to establish as well as to maintain relations between Libya and Italy.

As has been mentioned, many scholars have called for more empirical studies to be conducted especially in developing countries in order to identify the similarities and differences between PR and PD as well as to find out to what extent PR models and theories

could be applied to the field of PD, (see Fitzpatrick et al., 2013; Hayes, 2012; Ki, 2015; L'Etang, 2009; Signitzer & Coombs, 1992; Vanc & Fitzpatrick, 2016). Due to the fact that literature is scarce in the Arab world about the phenomenon under investigation, this study has linked between PR and PD in order to identify their role in building relationships between Libya and Italy. Furthermore, it has examined to what extent PR models could be used to build relationships between the two countries as well as the possibility of applying PR models to the field of PD in order to build or maintain relations between Libya and Italy, before and following the era of Colonel Gaddafi. This study confirms that PR and PD have been extensively used by Gaddafi's regime as well as all Libyan governments after the revolution in order to build and maintain relationships between Libya and Italy.

With regards to the four models of PR plus the two international models in terms of their roles in building relationships, the current study proves that participants are aware of practising all of these models. However, the two-way symmetrical model, cultural interpreter model, and the personal influence model were the most widely used by the Gaddafi regime and the new Libyan leaders after the revolution. In other words, the Gaddafi regime and Libyan governments after the revolution employed these three models rather than other models of PR in order to build and maintain the Libyan-Italian relationship. Thus, this study confirms the role of PR models in building relationships between nations, and it asserts the validity of applying these models at an international level, especially as this study has been conducted in light of Libyan political, economic and cultural variables. Moreover, the study has applied the four models of PR plus the two international models to the field of PD to find out to what extent these models could be used in building and maintaining Libyan-Italian relationships.

This study has proved that PR models can be applied to the field of PD in order to build relationships between governments. It also shows that PR models, particularly the two-way symmetrical model, cultural interpreter model, and the personal influence model were

commonly used by the Gaddafi regime and Libyan governments after the revolution to build co-operation and trust between Libya and Italy. Most notably, the same models are used in the field of PR as well as PD in order to build and preserve the Libyan-Italian relationship. In summary, what has been made clear by this study is that PR and PD have played an important role in building and maintaining Libyan-Italian ties. Furthermore, the study confirms that PR models could be applied to the field of PD. More specifically, the two-way symmetrical model, cultural interpreter model, and the personal influence model are considered to be the most appropriate models that could be used in order to build relationships.

#### **6.6. Measuring and Evaluating Libyan-Italian Relationships**

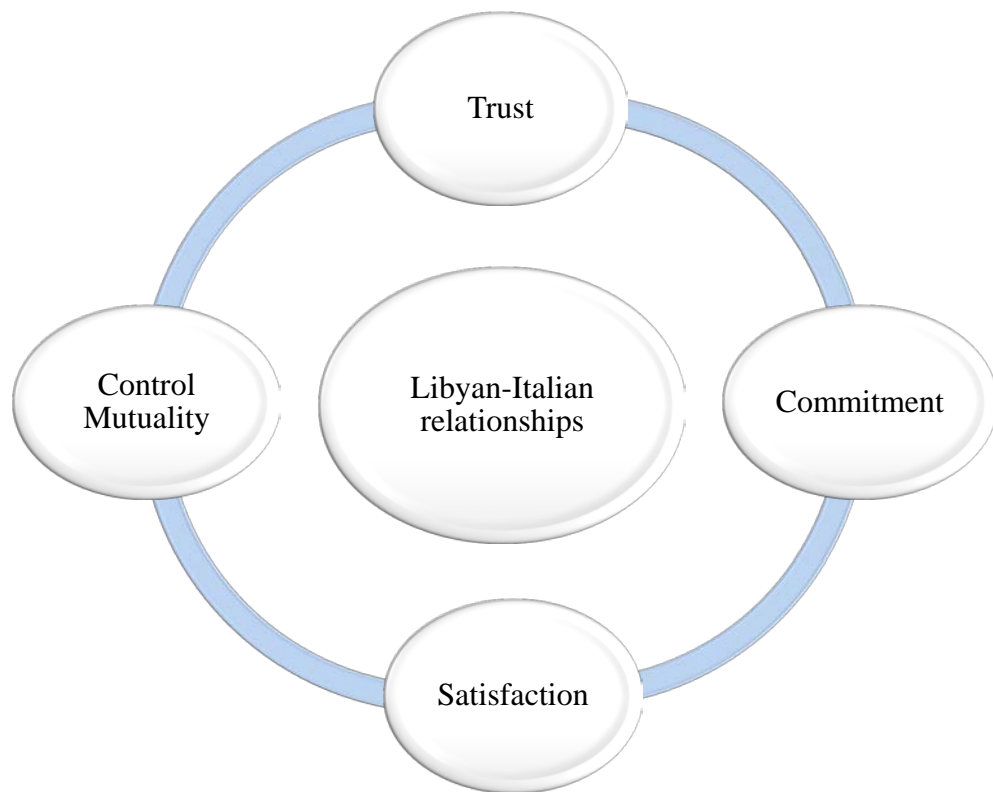
Libyan-Italian relations have witnessed many developments especially during the era of Colonel Gaddafi. However, the relation between both countries has become special and privileged after years of deterioration and instability. In this regard, both countries have employed PR as well as PD in order to build and maintain long-term bonds. The question that arises is that to what extent the relationship between Libya and Italy can be reliable? Which tools and techniques could be used in order to measure and evaluate the relationship between Libya and Italy? The rationale behind measuring and evaluating the relationship between both countries is to make sure that Libyan-Italian relationships are reliable, especially after the fall of the Gaddafi regime in 2011, which led to changing the political system in the country. Furthermore, as argued by Ki (2015), the notion of relationship is intangible and abstract. As mentioned earlier, the relational approach is used in this study in order to find its role in building relationships between Libya and Italy. The relational approach refers to the relationship among governments as well as between organisations and their public. It is built based on negotiations and two-way communication rather than one-way communication and disseminating information. In this respect, many studies have applied this approach in order to build mutually beneficial relationships between institutions

and their publics, as well as among organisations themselves (e.g. Almutairi, 2013; Botan and Taylor, 2004; Ferraro, 2015; Ki et al., 2015; Ledingham & Bruning, 2000).

With regards to tools and techniques that could be used in order to measure and evaluate the relationship that has been constructed over the last few years between Libya and Italy. According to Hon & Grunig (1999), short-term PR programmes and activities have been studied over the last few years, however, there is a dearth of studies that measure the role of PR programmes in building or promoting long-term relationships. They suggest some techniques and tools that could be used to measure and evaluate the role of PR activities in building long-term relationships, which include: control mutuality, trust, satisfaction commitment, exchange relationship, and communal relationship. In this respect, Ki (2015) argues that many techniques and dimensions have been suggested in order to measure PR activities in establishing long-term relationships. However, the four relationship components provided by Hon & Grunig (1999) which include control mutuality, satisfaction, trust, and commitment are widely used elements for the fundamental measure of relationship status. Ki also asserts that the four relationship dimensions have been proved by many studies to be reliable and valid in measuring and evaluating a long-term relationship. Moreover, Ki applied these dimensions to the field of PD. Thus, the following sections analyse each dimension and its role in measuring and evaluating the relationship between Libya and Italy. In other words, this is based on participants' perspectives toward Libyan-Italian relationships. All responses are classified into four elements or components of the relationships as suggested by Hon & Grunig (1999), that includes control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, and commitment (see figure 6.1).



Figure 6.1: Libyan-Italian Relationships in Light of the Components of the Relationship.



#### **6.6.1. Control Mutuality**

This component of the relationship dimensions refers to who has the power to influence the decision-making process between the two parties, along with the extent to which each of them contributes to the final decision. By the same token, Stafford & Canary argue that control mutuality is “the degree to which partners agree about which of them should decide relational goals and behavioural routines” (1991. p. 224). It is worth mentioning that some imbalance of power between two partners might exist. However, in well-established relationships there is a need to feel some degree of control between the partners (Ki, 2015). In this respect, Hon & Grunig (1999) noted that some imbalance of power between the parties involved is natural.

According to Ki (2015), who claims that in the literature of PD some concepts such as mutuality, trust-building, and power balance indicate a control mutuality. He also asserts that in contemporary PD the notion of power balance refers to the relationship between nations especially when there is stability between them. In terms of the control mutuality dimension in the field of PD, this dimension could play a key role for various reasons: (1) this component could act as an important player in building relationships with high political involvement. (2) The control mutuality or power balance could motivate both parties to identify a mutually beneficial resolution which may help in building long-term relationships (Huang, 2001a; Ki, 2015). Thus, in the field of PD, a high political involvement naturally exists between politicians as well as diplomats such as Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers, and Ambassadors.

Accordingly, in discussing control mutuality or power balance in terms of its role in measuring Libyan-Italian relationships. Libyan and Italian diplomats who participated in this study focused on the power balance in the relationships in order to build or maintain long-term links between both countries. In this respect, participants emphasised that Libyan-Italian relationships have been built based on negotiations and dialogue between Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts. They asserted that both countries have gained special and privileged relationships due to mutual respect and understanding. Furthermore, they assert that power was balanced between both countries based on mutual interests. For instance,

A diplomat talked about the role of this dimension in building and maintaining Libyan-Italian relationships:

Ambassador 15: What I would like to emphasise is that Libyan-Italian relationships are dominated by mutual respect from both sides. All decisions are made in accordance with a mutual understanding between Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts.

In the same line, another interviewee added that:

Prime Minister 3: Libyan-Italian relations are more stable than ever before. So, all agreements, and most importantly the treaty of 2008, have been reached between Libya and Italy based on common interests.

Likewise, Ambassadors 19 stated that:

Due to common interests between Libya and Italy, especially economic relations in the field of energy, these have helped both countries to make their decisions based on understanding and respect for each other. I would say both parties took their decisions jointly through negotiations.

In line with this, another participant said that:

Prime Minister 1: In the Libyan-Italian case, the balance of power between both partners has helped them to build long-term relationships. For instance, during Gaddafi's time when he refused to take Italy's compensation for the era of Italian colonialism, both parties could not reach a deal. However, after several years of negotiations, both countries signed the treaty of 2008 because power was shared equally by the two parties.

According to Fry et al., (2004), who defined the power balance or control mutuality as “the situation in international relations when there is stability between competing forces” (cited in Ki, 2015. p. 99). With regard to Libyan-Italian relationships, and based on participants' narratives, the balance of power between Libya and Italy has helped both partners to build long-term relationships and maintain them. Furthermore, it could be said that what has strengthened the balance of power between the two countries is the need for each other. It is worth mentioning that Ki (2015) argues that some studies have noted that an imbalance of power may exist, but in a well-established relationship both partners need to practise some control over one another. Unlike Ki's claim, this study asserts the importance of a balance of power in building long-term relationships as well as in maintaining them.

### **6.6.2. Satisfaction**

The second component of the relationship dimension is the satisfaction. This element indicates the extent to which one party feels favourably toward the other because positive expectations about the relationship are reinforced” (Hon & Grunig, 1999, p. 20). By the same token, Hung (2000) argues that satisfaction is a complicated element of the relationship dimension in order to be measured or evaluated, however, this dimension is still widely

applied in measuring and evaluating long-term relationships (cited in Almutairi, 2013). The latter claims that many studies in the field of PR have emphasised that the satisfaction component is a very important element in building or maintaining relationships. So, partners should take satisfaction into consideration when they seek to build relationships with each other. Satisfaction between two parties could be accrued when one party believes that the other one's relationship behaviours are positive (Hon & Grunig, 1999). By employing the satisfaction dimension in building long-term relationships, the level of satisfaction between parties could be increased with rewards received and a decrease in the costs incurred (Jo et al., 2004). On the same lines, Ki & Hon (2007) argue that the degree satisfaction could be evaluated when the advantages of the relationship between both parties exceed their expectations.

In the field of PD, as in any other type of relationships, satisfaction between nations (governments) represents a key pillar in building long-term relationships (Ki, 2015). In other words, active communications between governments would increase the level of satisfaction between them. In this context, Stafford & Canary (1991) assert that partners (governments) always see satisfaction as a prerequisite in order to assure continuing on-going relationships as well as building long-term relationships. Furthermore, Ki (2015) confirms it would be useful to apply the satisfaction dimension in order to measure and evaluate long-term relationships between nations in the PD context. Thus, the following sections demonstrate to what extent the satisfaction component has been used by Libyan and Italian diplomats in order to build long-term relationships as well as to preserve their on-going ties.

For example, one of the participants said that:

Prime Minister 1: I believe that the special and privileged relationships cannot be reached without the satisfaction of decision-makers in Libya and Italy. For instance, when the level of satisfaction was reinforced between the decision-makers in both countries, the treaty of 2008 was signed.

Another, example by Ambassador 19 who added that:

It was not easy to reach the level of satisfaction between Libyan and Italian leaders especially because of the background of Italian colonialism. However, in my opinion, communications and negotiations between both parties have helped in cultivating mutual satisfaction.

Another diplomat who participated in this study presented a relevant example:

Foreign Minister 7: Despite the painful colonial era, there was always a real desire of Libyan and Italian diplomats to overcome the disagreements of the past by focusing on positive rather than negative aspects. In this respect, economic relationships have played a pivotal role in creating a state of satisfaction between both countries.

In the same context, another interviewee asserted that:

Ambassador 16: Libya and Italy do have many elements that bind them together and link them in a positive way, not in a negative way. For example, regardless of the economic dimension, the history of Libya is also interconnected with the history of Italy as well as the cultural and geographical closeness between both peoples.

As argued by Almutairi (2013), Ki (2015), and Ki & Hon (2007), the satisfaction factor is very significant in building long-term relationships between nations as well as between societies and their citizens. When both partners who engage in a relationship are satisfied this helps to build long-term relationships between them (Ki, 2015). Thus, based on participants' statements who confirm that satisfaction between Libyan and Italian leaders exists, which has helped in building long-term relationships between Libya and Italy as well as helping to maintain on-going relations. Furthermore, they believe that there are some elements that help in creating satisfaction between Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts which are, for example, common interests between both countries; a true desire of Libyan and Italian leaders to close the chapter on the past; and active communications and negotiations between both parties.

### **6.6.3. Trust**

This component is the third of the relationship dimensions. The linkage between trust and satisfaction is very strong in which this dimension precedes satisfaction and commitment in the process of building relationships between partners (Jo et al., 2004). In this context, Ki (2015) confirms the strong correlation between the two dimensions. He also states that

satisfaction gives an indication of trust in the relationship between partners as well as the nature of the relationship in general. It is worth mentioning that this dimension is a very important factor for both PR and PD, in order to build long-term relationships. In the context of PR, many scholars have defined this dimension, for example, Ledingham & Bruning define trust as “a feeling that those in the relationship can rely on each other” (1998, p. 58). Furthermore, Hon & Grunig conceptualise trust as “one party’s level of confidence in and willingness to open oneself to the other party” (1999, p. 19). In addition, they argue that trust is a very complicated dimension which is always linked with several underlying dimensions such as integrity, dependability, and competence.

From a perspective of PD, several scholars have examined trust in terms of its role in building relationships. For example, Ki (2015) asserts that there is a similarity between the concept of credibility and trust. Both concepts are considered to be a pillar in the field of PD, in terms of building relationships. In the same vein, Nye (2008) emphasises the importance of credibility -trust- as an important component of relationship dimensions that have been used by governments to compete for their nation’s reputation. Moreover, there is competition among governments themselves as well as with other nongovernmental organisations to reinforce their own credibility in order to achieve their targeted objectives (Nye, 2008). By the same token, Gass & Seiter (2009) posit credibility as a multi-dimensional notion. They articulated three main dimensions of credibility in regard to the field of PD:

1. Expertise, competence, or qualifications (all of which refer to the source, who could be the President or one of a nation’s top officials, as well as the media that carry the message);
2. Trustworthiness of the sources that carry the message; and
3. Goodwill of all actors engaged in the international relationship, (cited in Ki, 2015, p. 100).

With regards to the role of trust as an important element in the process of relationship dimensions, participants clarified its role in building relationships between Libya and Italy.

For example:

Prime Minister 5: I would confirm that there was a lack of trust and scepticism in the relationship between Libyan leaders and their Italian counterparts, during the era of Colonel Gaddafi. Interestingly, at the outset of the revolution in 2011, also there was hesitation and lack of trust from Italian leaders towards the new Libyan leaders (NTC).

Another example can be seen in the statement of Ambassador 18, who said that:

Throughout the period of negotiations between the Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts, especially in the first years of negotiations, both parties were dealing cautiously with each other, due to the lack of trust between them.

In the same vein, another participant added that:

Ambassador 20: Negotiations between the Libyan side and their Italian counterparts lasted for more than ten years. I believe that the reason for the length of the negotiations was due to the lack of confidence between the two parties.

It can be seen from the previous statements that the absence of confidence, whether during the first years of negotiations in the era of Gaddafi or at the beginning of the revolution of 2011, affected the relationship between Libya and Italy when negotiations between the two partners lasted for more than ten years. However, after several years of negotiations and dialogue, both parties closed the book on disputes relating to the colonial era, thus entering a new era of relationships. Hence, the question that arises is how did both countries succeed in fostering trust with each other. In other words, to what extent has the trust dimension helped both parties in building long-term relationships? In this respect, participants articulated that:

Foreign Minister 11: The trust factor between Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts was based on dialogue and mutual communication between the two partners.

In the same context, another interviewee said that:

Ambassador 13: Building trust between Libyan leaders and their Italian counterparts took many years of negotiations. Continuing communication between both parties has helped in building up confidence between them.

In line with this, another participant added that:

Prime Minister 1: When leaders of both countries reached a level of trust with each other, they managed to build special and privileged relationships through signing the treaty of 2008.

Moreover, participants asserted that there were several factors that helped in building trust between Libyan and Italian diplomats, which are:

- Personal relationships between leaders of both countries have succeeded in building trust between the two parties which led to long-term relationships as well as promoting on-going relationships;
- The two-way communication and dialogue have played a very important role in building and reinforcing trust;
- Common interests between both parties helped in cultivating trust between them; and
- Goodwill as well as the desire of both parties to build bilateral relations.

Several studies have illustrated the importance of the trust component between both parties in order to build long-term relationships (e.g. Hon & Grunig, 1999; Ledingham & Bruning, 1998; Ki, 2015). Furthermore, in the context of PR and PD, L'Etang (2006) who studied the trust dimension in the field of PR and PD, found out that overlapping concepts of this dimension in both fields are obvious and it has a significant role in building relationships. By the same token, this study, which has linked PR and PD in terms of their role in building relationships, confirms the importance of trust in building long-term relationships between Libya and Italy as well as reinforcing on-going relationships that have been constructed over the last few years. It is worth mentioning that personal relationships between Libyan leaders and their Italian partners as well as the two-way communication and dialogue are the main pillar in building trust between them.

#### **6.6.4. Commitment**

The last component of the relationship dimension is commitment. This component refers to the extent to which two parties are connected with one another and also if they believe that the relationship with each other should be maintained and reinforced (Hon & Grunig, 1999). Ki (2015) states that this dimension is considered as a key element for building successful long-term relationships between both partners. In the same vein, Huang (2001b) emphasises that commitment is central to the relationship among organisations themselves as well as between organisations and their various partners. In respect to underlying dimensions of



commitment, there is continuance commitment, which indicates a certain line of action, and affective commitment, which refers to an emotional orientation (Hon & Grunig, 1999).

When considering the commitment dimension in the context of PD, Ross (2002) claims that dialogue and exchange are one of the main pillars of PD in building relationships. Moreover, Ross argues that a government is committed to engagement and dialogue with other governments as well as to their citizens, this results in building and promoting relationships between them. With regards to the link between commitment and dialogue in order to build relationships between partners, Kent & Taylor delineate commitment as “the extent to which an organisation gives itself over to dialogue, interpretation, and understanding in its interactions with publics” (2002, p. 25). By the same token, Nye (2004) asserts the importance of commitment as a component of relationship dimension in creating an enabling environment among governments in order to build long-term relationships. What’s more, Ki (2015) echoed the importance of this dimension in contemporary PD. It has been used by many governments, for example, the Obama Administration, to build long-term relationships with targeted publics. Moreover, Ki also confirms that the relational aspect of commitment is required in the field of PD especially when nations or governments seek to build relationships with other governments as well as to obtain their citizens support. Thus, the following paragraphs show the role of commitment in building relationships between Libya and Italy.

For example, Foreign Minister 9 said that:

There are more than twelve agreements that have been signed between Libya and Italy, most importantly the treaty of 2008. As Foreign Minister, I have never had an impression that the Italian side was not willing to implement the bilateral agreements between both countries.

Another participant added that:

Foreign Minister 11: Libya and Italy are committed to what has been signed by their leaders, and this was confirmed by the NTC and the first elected government after the revolution of 2011. All statements from both parties confirm the commitment to all treaties, especially the treaty of 2008.

Similarly, Ambassador 20 stated that:

There is no doubt that the commitment between Libyan diplomats and their Italian partners does exist. I believe that the reason behind the commitment is the need for each other due to their common interests.

Furthermore, the vast majority of the interviewees asserted that there is a deep desire between Libyan and Italian leaders to create an appropriate environment in order to build long-term relationships as well as to promote their on-going relationships. Commitment is always considered as an important element in promoting Libyan-Italian relations. In this respect, participants provided some examples which confirm the commitment of both parties.

Ambassador 19: During the era of Colonel Gaddafi, and after the treaty of 2008 was ratified and, on many other occasions, both Gaddafi and Berlusconi showed their commitment to what had been reached by both countries. I remember on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2010, both leaders celebrated the second anniversary of the treaty of 2008, asserting their continued commitment to all chapters of the treaty.

With regard to the degree of commitment between Libya and Italy after the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime in 2011, participants clarified that:

Prime Minister 3: In the first week of April 2011, Italy recognised the NTC as the sole representative of the Libyan people. A few days later, the President of the NTC visited Italy for his first trip outside of the country to reassure the Italian side that the NTC adheres to all previous agreement that had been signed by both parties.

Another example can be seen in the statement of Foreign Minister 10 who said that:

In 2012, the Libyan Prime Minister and his Italian counterpart announced in Tripoli the so called “Tripoli Declaration”. This declaration expressed the deep relationship between both countries as well as a commitment by the two parties to all previous agreements.

In the same vein, another participant added that:

Prime Minister 2: After the revolution of 2011, the reference framework of Libyan-Italian relations is the treaty of 2008. All successive governments after the revolution have sought to reactivate the treaty with Italian governments. Recently, many of the chapters of the treaty have been activated in aspects such as education, health, security, infrastructure, and coast guards etc.

The literature reveals that the commitment dimension has long been a central component in building relationships among governments as well as between organisations and their various publics (Hon & Grunig, 1999; Huang, 2001b; Ki, 2015; Stafford & Canary, 1991).

For example, Berry & Parasuraman (1991) assert that relationships among partners are built based on the mutual commitment to each other. As can be seen in the participants' narratives, commitment as one of the relationship dimensions that has played a significant role in building long-term relationships between Libya and Italy. Since this study seeks to examine the role of PR and PD in building relationships, it emphasises the importance of the commitment dimension in building relationships.

It is worth mentioning that I have applied the four relationship components as delivered by Hon & Grunig (1999) which include control mutuality, satisfaction, trust, and commitment in order to measure and evaluate Libyan-Italian relationships. As asserted by Ki, who applied these dimensions in the context of PD, these four components have been extensively used in order to measure and evaluate long-term relationships among partners. The reason behind measuring and evaluating Libyan-Italian relationships is to find out to what extent the relationships between Libya and Italy are special and privileged, as claimed by many Libyan and Italian diplomats. What has been made clear by this study is that these dimensions have played a very significant role in building long-term relationships as well as maintaining on-going relations between both countries. These four aforementioned dimensions provided by Hon & Grunig, could be considered as a fundamental measure of long-term relationships among governments as well as between organisations and their targeted publics. It is worth mentioning that these four components have given a clear indication of the depth of the relationship between Libya and Italy. This is consistent with what has been explicitly articulated by the majority of the participants who acknowledged that relations between Libya and Italy are special and privileged in many areas, despite the changes after the Gaddafi regime fell in 2011. They also emphasised that the ties between both countries have been based on political, economic and historical, and geographical aspects (see Appendix 8).

## **6.7. The Overlap of Public Relations with Public Diplomacy**

The literature in the field of PR and PD has shown the commonalities as well as the differences between the two disciplines. Several studies in the both fields have emphasised an overlap between PR and PD does exist, especially in terms of their roles in relationships building (e.g. Hayes, 2012; Ki, 2015; L'Etang, 2009; Signitzer & Coombs, 1992; Signitzer & Wasmer, 2006; Snow, 2015; Vanc & Fitzpatrick, 2016). It is worth mentioning that this study has linked PR with PD in order to identify their roles in building and maintaining Libyan-Italian relationships. Furthermore, like practising PR, practising PD is different from one country to another, based on the interests and policies of each nation (Hayes, 2012; Sriramesh, 1996). With regard to what extent PR and PD are linked to each other. Signitzer & Coombs (1992) are the early researchers who studied the correlation between PR and PD. They affirm that the link between the two disciplines does exist. Also, Tam (2015) emphasises the similarities between the two fields. In recent literature, Vanc & Fitzpatrick assert both disciplines share “similar philosophical and practical dimensions” (2016, p. 5). By the same token, all interviewees in this study comment on the similarities between PR and PD. For example, “PR and PD are two faces of the same coin. They complement each other,” said Ambassador 18. This is consistent with (PRIA) 2013, who also says that PR and PD are “two sides of the same coin”. Moreover, Prime Minister 6 agreed with this, saying that “PR and PD are an integral part of each other”. What’s more, Ambassador 15 added that “Both disciplines complement one another, and it is difficult to conceive them as parallel lines”. This point of view was shared by Ambassador 20 who said that “It is very difficult to separate PR from PD, both fields are intertwined”. This was echoed by Ambassador 17 “The convergences between both fields are obvious”. In the same line, “PR and PD are considered as complementary to one another, they are not contradictory tools. Both are needed more than ever in the context of relationship building,” added Ambassador 13. By the same token, Hayes’s study confirms that:

“The lines between public diplomacy and public relations are blurring because of a complexity of issues, activists, and companies behaving like governments. Conversely, governments use PR techniques. This is forcing convergence,” (2012, p. 155).

On the other hand, some scholars say that there are differences between PR and PD. In this respect, as argued by Golan & Yang (2015), the main differentiations between PR and PD can be identified in their ultimate aims. For instance, PR seeks to build a mutual beneficial relationship between an organization and its publics. While, PD strives to obtain an international support for a country's foreign policy. Furthermore, Fitzpatrick et al., (2013) argue that despite the link between the two disciplines, PR is not PD and vice versa. In line with this, Macnamara (2012) confirms that, although there is interconnection between PR and PD, some differences between the two fields do exist. The latter also claims that there are no major differences between PR and PD, as Fitzpatrick and his colleagues pointed out in their study. In this context, although there was unanimity among participants who confirm the convergence between PR and PD, at the same time, they also believe that there are differences between the two fields. With regards to the differences between PR and PD, participants asserted the difference lies in the nature of both concepts. For example,

Prime Minister 4: In my opinion, the only difference between PR and PD is in the nature of both concepts when PD is an official channel used by Foreign Ministers or Ambassadors whereas PR is not an official channel.

A participant clarified this point “Unlike PR practitioners, what is said by PD practitioners such as Foreign Ministers or Ambassadors, and special envoys is taken as an official statement that expresses a country’s view”, Ambassador 14. This was echoed by Prime Minister 1 “Practising PD is more formal than PR”. Likewise, Snow (2015) asserts that PD is a more formal channel which is always linked to foreign affairs and the national interest. Furthermore, the findings of Hayes’s study show that “The diplomat’s audience is narrower and there’s sometimes a need for secrecy” (2012, p. 156). This finding was echoed by Prime Minister 1 and Ambassador 13 who said that “The nature of practising PD needs a kind of secrecy because PD is practised by diplomats such as Foreign Ministers and Ambassadors

and discussions are usually conducted behind closed doors”. Thus, in summary, participants' statements reflect the convergences between PR and PD whereby both fields could be considered as an integral part of each other. In addition, diplomats should not use both concepts as distinctly separate. However, practising PR carries less responsibility than practising PD. In other words, the difference between the two fields could be seen in their nature whereby PD is more formal than PR.

Despite the differences between PR and PD in terms of the nature of practising the two fields, it could be said that there is a consensus among participants in this study about the strong link between PR and PD in terms of overlapping roles. With regards to the links between PR and PD, Prime Minister 5 said that “PR is employed by diplomats in order to succeed in their missions.” He added, “You cannot establish strong diplomatic relations unless you have strong networks of PR as well”. Another diplomat added that “PR reinforces PD, through paving ways in front of diplomats such as Foreign Ministers or Ambassadors to achieve their goals”, Ambassador 15. In the same line, “Yes, PR and PD differ from each other in terms of the nature of practice, but both concepts reinforce one another”, stated Foreign Minister 12. This is in addition to the literature that confirms the strong link between PR and PD. This study also has shown the overlap between the two fields. The question that arises is where is the point of convergence between PR and PD? In other words, do both fields use same methods to achieve their goals?

All participants, including those who said there is a difference between PR and PD, assert that building relationships as well as maintaining on-going relations are the main bridge that links PR with PD. For example, Ambassador 17 said that: “The convergence between the two concepts lies in their roles in building relationships”. In line with this “PR and PD are considered to be very important tools that have been used by governments in order to build or maintain relationships” added Prime Minister 6. Likewise, “The similarity between PR and PD lies in their roles in building and strengthening relationships”, attested Foreign

Minister 9. Another diplomat thought the same, “PR and PD pretty much aim towards the same goal which is building and reinforcing relationships between countries”, Ambassador 16.

It should be noted that the relational approach has been applied in this study because of its role in building relationships. The reason for employing this approach to the field of PR and PD is because, as posited by Almutairi (2013), and Ferraro (2015), it seeks to establish or promote relationships between governments, based on dialogue and two-way communications. So, the following section illustrates methods that have been used in PD and PR which leads to an increasing overlap between both fields.

“Dialogue and negotiation are the approaches that intersect between the two disciplines”, said Ambassador 19. This point was reinforced by Foreign Minister 11 “Both concepts use the two-way communication, dialogue, and the understanding of each other’s culture, in order to build long-term relationships”. “PR and PD apply the same techniques such as dialogue and negotiation in order to build or maintain relationships”, added Ambassador 18. In the same vein, L’Etang (1996) asserts that PR and PD rely on the two-way communication approach to build mutual, bilateral relations. Similarly, Hayes (2012) endorses this point when he states that both fields overlap in terms of using communication and negotiation in order to build relationships.

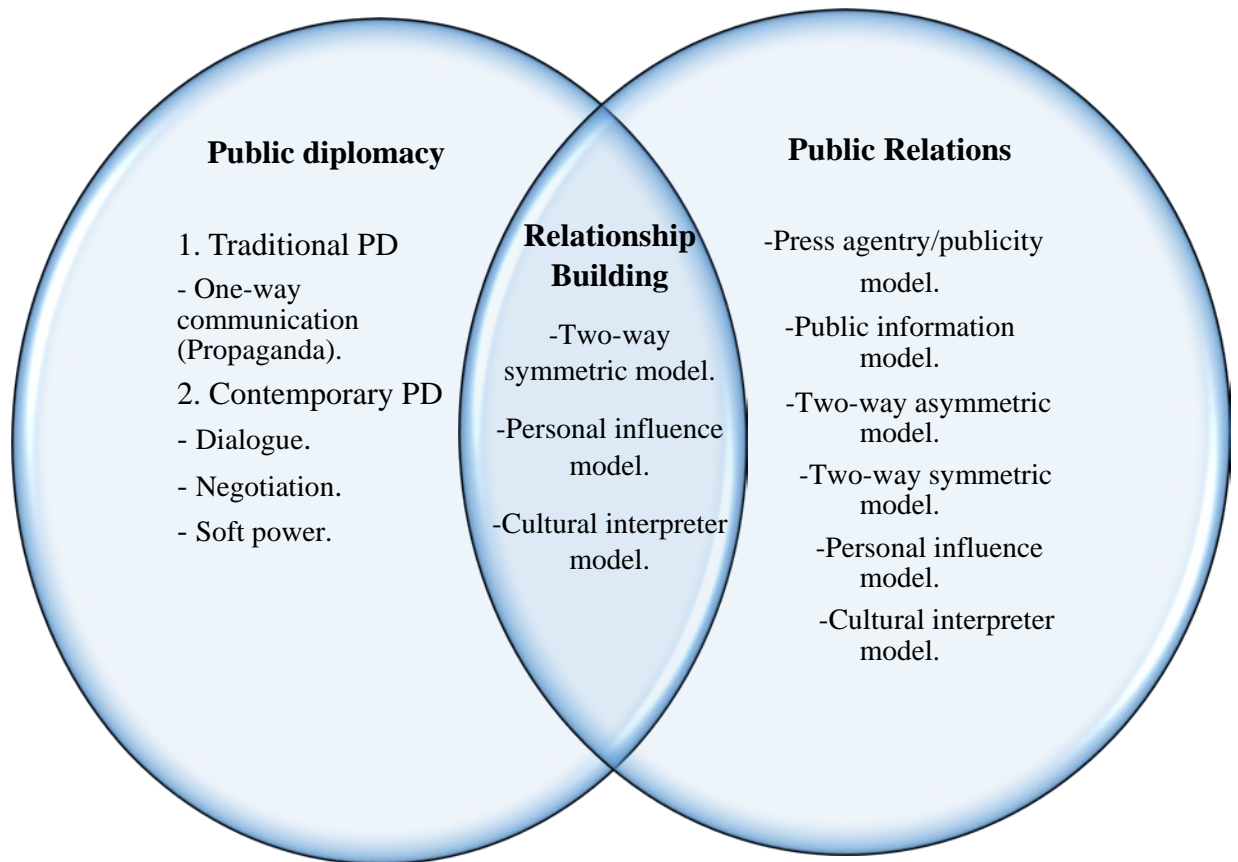
As argued by Golan (2015), Hayes (2012), Hiebert (2005), and Scott-Railton (2013), who claim that there are several elements such as communication technology, globalisation, and the terror attacks of 9/11 as well as the so-called Arab Spring that have pushed governments to build relationships with other governments as well as their citizens/foreign publics. These authors emphasise that disparate elements have increased the importance of PR and PD as essential tools for building relationships among governments as well as between non-governmental organisations. As mentioned earlier, the central role of PR is building relationships. By the same token, the core aim of contemporary PD such as social media is

also about building relationships (Al-Rawi, 2017; Golan, 2015). For instance, in his study about the news values on social media, Al-Rawi found out that "the news organizations such as RT Arabic and Al-Alam, which are managed by their respective governments, can function as public diplomacy tools, though other purposes might be involved like promoting tourism" (2017. p. 881). In the same way, this study shows the importance of PD in building bilateral relationships between Libya and Italy.

According to participants' narratives, relationship building is considered to be the pillar that links PR with PD. In this respect, Fitzpatrick et al., (2013) argue that the overlap between PR and PD is a "natural process" because the main focus of both concepts is building relationships. As argued by Hayes (2012), very little attention had been paid by PR scholars about this subject till much later. The latter asserts that PR and PD have a very strong relationship. However, further studies that link PR and PD in terms of relationships building are required, added Hayes. The similarities between PR and PD have encouraged PR theorists and researchers to apply PR theory and models to the field of contemporary PD. In this respect, Fitzpatrick (2007) argues that applying the Relationship Management Theory (Ledingham, 2003) could help contemporary PD to achieve its government's goals, through building long-term relationships with other governments. This study has made clear that there is a convergence between PR and PD especially in terms of their roles in building relationships. In other words, both concepts use the two-way symmetric model, cultural interpreter model, and the personal influence model in order to build long-term relationships as well as to maintain on-going relations (see figure 6.2).



Figure 6.2: The Overlap of Public Relations with Public Diplomacy



Accordingly, in order to identify the role of PR and PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy, I asked the participants which concepts have been extensively used by Libyan and Italian diplomats to build relationships between the two countries. In other words, I asked the participants, for example, what is the most applicable concept in building Libyan-Italian ties, PR or PD?

For example, Prime Minister 3 said that:

In the Libyan-Italian case, where there was an earlier colonial background, dominating relations between both countries, what has succeeded in strengthening relations between them was not only diplomatic efforts, but also PR efforts that helped to change the stereotypical image of Libyans about Italy.

Another diplomat agreed with this:

Prime Minister 6: Both concepts have been used to build Libyan-Italian relationships. For example, Gaddafi used PR to build long-term diplomatic relations with Italy. Similarly, after the revolution, PR, through the personal influence approach, has been employed in order to convince Italian diplomats to abandon Gaddafi in order to preserve their economic interests.

This point of view was shared by:

Ambassador 20: The combination of PR and PD is the basis for building Libyan-Italian relationships because both have been employed in building and promoting relations between the two countries before and after the revolution of 2011.

Likewise, Ambassador 13 added that: “The success of PR in building and maintaining Libyan-Italian relationships, whether before or after the Libyan Revolution of 2011, depends on diplomatic relations and vice versa”. “PR and PD have been used equally by Libyan diplomats and their Italian partners in order to build bilateral relationships between the two countries”, said Ambassador 15. This point was echoed by Foreign Minister 10 “In the context of Libyan-Italian relationships, PR and PD have equal importance in building relationships between the countries. The two concepts complement each other”.

There is no doubt that PR and PD have been equally practised in order to build long-term relationships as well as maintain on-going relations between Libya and Italy, according to participants’ statements. In summary, what has been underlined by this study reinforces arguments made in the literature that PR and PD have become more than ever very important tools in building relationships. The convergence, especially in terms of their roles in building relationships does exist. There is a difference, however. Furthermore, the two-way symmetric model, cultural interpreter model, and the personal influence model are considered to be methods that are used by both fields in order to create or reinforce relationships. In order to build or maintain long-term relationships among nations, it is imperative for governments to employ PR and PD as vital tools.

## **6.8. Conclusion**

This chapter has explored building and maintaining Libyan-Italian relationships after the Gaddafi regime fell in 2011. In order to identify the nature of relationships between Libya and Italy and what elements have shaped the ties between the two countries, the chapter has analysed: The development of the diplomatic–political environment after the overthrow of Gaddafi in 2011 and the role of PR and PD in establishing or reinforcing the ties between Libya and Italy, during and after the revolution of 2011. Furthermore, in this chapter, the four relationship components that are provided by Hon & Grunig (1999) which include control mutuality, satisfaction, trust, and commitment have been applied in order to measure and evaluate the relationships between Libya and Italy. Moreover, the commonalities as well as the differences between PR and PD concerning their roles in building relationships, have been discussed.

The relationship between Italian diplomats and new Libyan leaders (NTC) at the outset of the Libyan revolution in 2011 was characterised by hesitation and the lack of trust between them. However, the relationship between the two parties changed when Italy announced its abandonment of Gaddafi, recognising the NTC as the sole representative of the country. Since then, relationships have become, as before, special and privileged between both countries in many domains. In this respect, PR and PD have been applied by Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts in order to build trust as well as to maintain their on-going relationships.

The study shows the importance of PR and PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy. More precisely, after the revolution, PR and PD have been used in order to reinforce confidence and maintain on-going relations between both countries. Moreover, the study's findings show that PR models could be applied to the field of PD. However, the two-way symmetrical model, cultural interpreter model, and the personal influence model are widely used by both parties in order to promote the relationships between Libya and Italy.

Furthermore, Hon & Grunig's (1999) four relationship components have played a very significant role in building long-term relationships as well as maintaining on-going relations between both countries. What's more, the overlap, particularly in terms of their roles in building relationships does definitely exist. However, there are differences between them.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

### **7.1. Introduction**

This study has examined the role of PR and PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy, determining how both concepts have helped both countries to build long-term relationships as well as maintain their on-going relations. Furthermore, this study has explored the extent to which PR models could be applied to the field of PD, especially since these models are widely used in developed countries. This research also has sought to find out if these models could be applied in institutions of developing countries, such as the case of building the Libyan-Italian relations. Moreover, the study has endeavoured to identify what models could be used in both fields and it strives to investigate the similarities and differences between PR and PD in terms of their roles in building relationships. As explained earlier, the literature review has shown the link between PR and PD in building and promoting relationships among governments as well as between institutions and their publics. This has encouraged me to conduct the current study in light of the Libyan environmental variables.

The previous two chapters have explored the role of PR and PD in building relations between Libya and Italy in two different eras, namely before and after the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime. Moreover, they have investigated the validity of relations between the two countries through applying the four relationship components as presented by Hon & Grunig (1999), as well as identifying the commonalities and the differences between the two disciplines. The subsequent material presents the study findings based on the study's questions. Furthermore, it presents the originality and contribution of the study to the current state of knowledge as well as its limitations and proposes a number of future studies.

## **7.2. Research Findings: Back to the Study's Questions**

As previously mentioned, this study has sought to unveil the role of PR and PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy. In order to identify this role, as has been practised by Libyan and Italian diplomats, the questions of the thesis were formulated in a three-level analysis which included a study of PR and PD during the Gaddafi era, a study of PR and PD after the fall of the Gaddafi regime, and the overlap between PR and PD in terms of their roles in building relationships. This study is of paramount significance as it is the first empirical attempt to investigate and examine the role of PR and PD in building relationships in the Arab world in general and Libya particular. Consequently, the findings of this study could be seen as a reference framework for researchers in Libya and Arab world alike, especially in terms of the role of PR and PD in building relationships. The following sections revisit the questions posed by the study, which are:

### **The underlying research question:**

- To what extent have PR and PD helped Libya in building relationships with Italy before and after the fall of the Gaddafi regime?

### **The secondary questions:**

- What problems affected Libya's relations with Italy before the fall of the Gaddafi regime?
- What strategies have the new Libyan regime used to establish and ameliorate Libya's ties with Italy?
- In light of the Libyan-Italian case, what are the similarities and the differences between PR and PD in terms of their roles in building relationships?

#### **7.2.1. The Practice of Public Relations in Libya**

Some research studies reveal that the roots of PR in the Arab world could stretch back to the era of Prophet Muhammad 'peace be upon him', 1400 years ago (Fakhri et al., 1980; Kruckeberg, 1996). However, a practice of PR on the level of institutional dimension in Arab

countries does not date back more than 30 years (Kirat, 2005). Furthermore, practicing the PR profession in Arab countries differs from its practice in Western countries (Almutairi, 2013). In this respect, Al-Enad (1990) argues that there are some environmental and social factors in the Arab world that affect PR in terms of its role and function. He also adds that:

Public relations played different roles and perform different functions in third world countries than those played and performed in developed nations. In the Arab world, labelling public relations as "general affairs" and "general relations" may have contributed to the persistent vagueness of the nature, goals, roles, and functions of public relations. Therefore, it plays different roles. But there may also be other reasons. One of these is what we call environmental factors which not only affect the practice of PR but also dictate certain ways and methods and perhaps different goals, philosophies and values of public relations (1990, p. 24).

It should be noted that several empirical studies have been conducted on the field of PR in Arab countries from different perspectives such as management, business administration, social organisation and media studies (e.g. Almutairi, 2013; Abdelhay, 2014; Diab, 2010). Findings of these studies have shown that the PR profession has witnessed great development and growth in many Arab countries due to its important role in building relationships between organisations and their public. Furthermore, in the last few years, PR companies in the Arab countries have grown 10.44% compared to the 8% growth of PR firms in the world (Abdelhay, 2014). This reflects the importance of the role played by PR in the Arab world. Like several other Arab countries, practicing PR in Libya still suffers from a misunderstanding of its concept and nature. In this respect, many PR studies in both the private and the public sector such as (Algazali, 1996; Alareshi, 2002; Altaleb, 2006; Asbeta, 2000; Bushala, 2000 and Zuhri, 2003) have summarised the following points:

1. Top managements in Libyan institutions do not pay enough attention to the PR profession;
2. The lack of specialists in the field of PR led to practising PR roles through other non-specialist departments in Libyan institutions; and

3. In most Libyan institutions, the PR profession is perceived as a secondary job which represents, for example, receiving delegations, ticket booking and assisting customers.

This research has investigated the role of PR and PD in building relationships. More precisely, it has studied the PR profession as a management function that had been used by Libyan and Italian diplomats in order to build and maintain the Libyan-Italian relations. Several scholars have proven the importance of PR as a managerial tool used in order to achieve an organisation's goals. In this regard, Grunig et al. define PR as “a strategic management function [that helps] manage relationships with key publics that affect organizational mission, goals, and objectives” (1995, p. 85). Thus, based on participant's narratives in this study who assert that PR as a management function has been used, both during and after the Gaddafi regime, in order to build long-term relationships between Libya and Italy. For example, the Gaddafi regime and the Italian governments employed the PR profession as a tool of communication, through dialogue and negotiations, to overcome all issues related to the colonial period, and the two countries did indeed succeed in building special and privileged relationships. Similarly, during and after the Libyan revolution in 2011, PR has been utilised by the NTC and the successive Libyan governments as a means to promote the on-going relationships between the two countries. For instance, it is worth mentioning that ENI (an Italian multinational oil and gas company), UniCredit Bank, The Libyan Central Bank, the Libyan Investment Authority and the Libyan National Oil & Gas Corporation have all been employed, among others, by Libyan and Italian diplomats as PR conduits in order to build long-term relationships as well as to reinforce the status quo between the two countries.

Furthermore, unlike the aforementioned studies (e.g. Algazali, 1996; Alareshi, 2002; Altaieb, 2006; Asbeta, 2000), this study demonstrates that the PR profession is no longer practised in the Arab world as a secondary job dealing with assisting guests, ticket booking and



receiving delegations. Indeed, this research agrees with some studies conducted in Arab countries (e.g. Almutairi, 2013; Abdelhay, 2014; Diab, 2010), which find that, recently, governmental and non-governmental organisations have paid more attention to the PR profession. However, there is still an overlap between a PR department and other departments due to the lack of PR specialists and practitioners. This study has also highlighted the importance of PR as a contemporary communication instrument that could be used to achieve governmental and non-governmental organisations' objectives.

### **7.2.2. The Practice of Public Diplomacy in Libya**

Nations, through their leaders, foreign ministers, ambassadors and special envoys seek to establish or promote bilateral relations with other nations, especially those that share common interests. In the past, PD was perceived as a kind of one-way communication used by governments to influence public opinion in other countries (Connolly-Ahern & Ma, 2015; Senaratne, 2016). In contemporary societies, this approach (one-way communication; propaganda) no longer exists among countries that seek to build long-term relationships. Ki (2015) claims that, recently, the notion of diplomacy has shifted from traditional diplomacy towards PD. The reasons behind this shift are the rapid evolution of communication technology as well as the growing impact of public opinion on decision-makers in governmental and non-governmental organisations (Signitzer & Coombs, 1992). It is worth noting that the nature of relationships among countries is ruled by what kind of diplomacy is used. In other words, PD is practised based on the foreign policy goals and interests of each country.

In this study, PD refers to its role as a management function in building relationships between Libya and Italy. In other words, this study has posed, and attempted to answer the question of, what extent a contemporary PD has contributed in establishing or maintaining the Libyan-Italian relations. In this context, Kochhar & Molleda (2015) assert that

communications have become the core of the contemporary PD, and a means to build or maintain relationships among governments.

In light of the above discussion, this study has found evidence suggesting that a contemporary PD has been used by Libyan and Italian diplomats in order to build and maintain the Libyan-Italian relations. Regarding the Gaddafi era, during the first three decades of Gaddafi's rule, the Libyan-Italian ties witnessed a period of instability and tension due to several reasons such as the international isolation, and Gaddafi's demands concerning the period of the Italian occupation of Libya. After a long period of official negotiations lasting more than ten years, Gaddafi's regime entered a new era of relationships with Italy. In this context, PD, as an important and an official communication tool, was employed by Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts to reach a point of understanding about issues relating the Italian colonialism era. This started in 1998 when both countries signed an official agreement, the so-called "Joint Declaration". This agreement led to signing the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation in 2008 at Benghazi. Along the same lines, Lombardi (2012), Mezran & De Maio (2007) and Varvelli (2010) emphasise that due to the Libyan and Italian diplomats efforts, both countries succeeded in closing the chapter of the past and normalising ties between Tripoli and Rome. It is worth mentioning that despite the fall of the Gaddafi regime in 2011, relations between the two countries have remained unchanged. Furthermore, after the fall of the Gaddafi regime, PD has been used by the NTC and the successive Libyan governments to promote the on-going Libyan-Italian relationships.

As already mentioned, several studies have asserted the significance of PD as an official communication tool used by governments in order to achieve their interests (e.g. Golan, 2015; Hayes, 2012; Ki, 2015 and Nye, 2004; Simjanoska, 2017). This study has confirmed, using the Libyan-Italian relations as a case study, the importance of a contemporary PD as a communication tool and highlights its role in overcoming issues relating to the colonial past

between the Libya and Italy as well as building bridges of cooperation between both sides. What's more, the study, in synch with literature, has asserted that propaganda and one-way communication no longer work especially among governments that seek to build mutual beneficial relationships.

### **7.2.3. The Practice of Public Relations Models in Libya**

This study has applied PR models to the fields of PR and PD. As previously stated, these models are Grunig & Hunt's (1984) four PR models, which are (the press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical models), plus, the two international models (the personal influence and the cultural interpreter models), which emerged as a result of the study that Grunig and his colleagues conducted in Greece, India, and Taiwan (Grunig et al., 1995). Several scholars have criticised Grunig & Hunt's (1984) four PR models. However, these models remain dominant in the field of PR and are considered as one of the main theoretical frameworks in the field (Mackey, 2003).

There has been a call from scholars in the field of PR to study PR models and theories in light of a country's environmental elements (such as political, cultural, and economic elements), especially in developing countries, in order to increase an awareness of practising the PR profession (e.g. Culbertson & Chen, 1996; Sriramesh et al., 1999; Vercic et al., 1996). Furthermore, several theorists have called for linking the field of PR with other disciplines to boost its development in terms of theory and practice (e.g. Gower, 2006; Heath, 2001; Sriramesh & Vercic, 2001; Toth, 2009). Responding to these calls, this study has linked PR with PD in order to establish their roles in building relationships. Furthermore, the study has applied PR models to the field of PR as well as the field of PD. The rationale behind applying these models is to test the hypothesis of its practice at the international level, as has been requested by many scholars, and discover to what extent the PR models could be applied to the field of PD. The study has been conducted in light of the Libyan political, economic and

cultural variables to investigate the contribution of these models in building relationships between Libya and Italy, in the context of PD.

Findings of this study have made clear that Libyan and Italian diplomats, who have played an important role in building and preserving Libyan-Italian relations, were aware of practising the original four models and the two international models. The two-way symmetrical model, the cultural interpreter model and the personal influence model have been more widely used in this study than other models. The Gaddafi regime used the two-way symmetrical model, the cultural interpreter model and the personal influence model to build long-term relationships with Italian governments. Similarly, after the Libyan revolution of 2011, the NTC and the successive Libyan governments have utilised the three aforementioned models to enhance the Libyan-Italian relationships that have been constructed over the past decades. In this context, this study has demonstrated the importance of PR models in building relations between Libya and Italy. Furthermore, it has confirmed the possibility of applying these models at the international level, especially in developing countries such as Libya. The study has also endorsed the literature assertion that PR models are considered as one of the main theoretical frameworks in the PR field. By the same token, the study has also asserted that PR models have been practised in the field of PD by Libyan and Italian diplomats in order to establish and promote relations between the two countries. In other words, the two-way symmetrical model, the cultural interpreter model and the personal influence model have all been extensively practiced in the field of PD. Thus, one could establish that PR models could be applied to the field of PD especially in terms of building relationships. Moreover, the two-way symmetrical model, the cultural interpreter model and the personal influence model could be considered as models that link between PR and PD in terms of theory and practice. This study has proved that PR models such as the two-way symmetrical model, the cultural interpreter model and the personal influence model

are considered to be the most appropriate models that could be used to build relationships whether they are applied in the field of PR or PD.

#### **7.2.4. The Role of Public Relations and Public Diplomacy in Building Relationships**

This study has sought to identify the role of PR and PD in building relationships. In order to investigate this role, I have bridged both fields with one another through applying the relational approach. Since this approach was introduced by Ferguson in 1984, several scholars have tested its role in building relationships, and have proved that the relational approach has played a significant role in creating bilateral relations among organisations as well as between organisations and their audience (e.g. Almutairi, 2013; Botan & Taylor, 2004; Ferraro, 2015; Ki et al., 2015; Ledingham & Bruning, 2000).

With regards to the role of PR in building relationships, a study of the literature in the field of PR has confirmed that the central role of PR profession is building relationships between organisations and their public. For instance, Ledingham (2001, 2003) asserts that the relational approach is considered to be an important framework for PR in terms of theory and practice especially regarding its role in building relationships. Similarly, Ferraro (2015) endorses that the relational approach seeks to establish bilateral relations among institution based on dialogue and negotiations, rather than one-way communication; and that this is the main role of modern PR. He adds that this approach is one of the best frameworks for PR departments that tend to build relationships with targeted stakeholders. In the context of PD, unlike traditional diplomacy, the core of contemporary PD is building relationships (Golan & Yang, 2015), as governments employ modern PD in order to build or maintain relations with other governments. In the same vein, Leonard et al., (2002) assert that PD works towards “building relationships; understanding the needs of other countries, cultures and peoples; communicating our points of view; correcting misperceptions; looking for areas we can find in common cause” (cited in Snow, 2015, p. 85). Furthermore, with regards to applying the relational approach to the field of PD, Fitzpatrick (2007) claims that applying

relationship management theories and models to the field of PD could help reinforce its theoretical underpinning. This is because the relational approach (as illustrated earlier) increases the capacity of governmental and non-governmental organisations to establish or promote relationships among each other as well as with their publics.

Accordingly, a great number of scholars in the field of PR and PD have emphasised that building relationships is one of the main roles of both disciplines, and that this aim is one of the convergence points between the two fields. Similarly, this study has confirmed that PR and PD have played a significant role in building the Libyan-Italian relationships as well as maintaining it, both during the Gaddafi era, and after the fall of the Gaddafi regime in 2011. For instance, the Gaddafi regime utilised both concepts, as a management tool, to build long-term relationships with the Italian governments. As an example, after a decade of negotiations, the Gaddafi regime and the Italian governments, through employing dialogue, negotiations, and two-way communication, succeeded in overcoming all outstanding issues concerning the Italian colonialism of Libya. After the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime in 2011, PR and PD have been utilised by the NTC and the successive Libyan governments in order to reinforce the Libyan-Italian relationships that had been constructed over the past few years.

There is a unanimity among Libyan and Italian diplomats who participated in this study that despite the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime in 2011, relations between the two countries have remained special and privileged. Moreover, they asserted that the Libyan-Italian relations have been built based on political, economic, historical and geographical aspects. In order to ascertain the validity of the claim that the relations between Libya and Italy are special and privileged, I have applied the four relationship components, as presented by Hon & Grunig (1999), which include control mutuality, satisfaction, trust and commitment. As argued by Ki (2015), the four relationship components are widely used as a measure of a relationship status among partners. He also emphasises that several empirical studies have

proved that these dimensions are reliable and valid in measuring and evaluating long-term relationships. By the same token, this study has shown that the four relationship dimensions have been employed by Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts to build long-term relationships between the two countries as well as maintain the status quo. Furthermore, these dimensions could be considered as a fundamental measure for relations that have been constructed for a long time between partners, as is the case in the Libyan-Italian relation.

#### **7.2.5. The Similarities and Differences between Public Relations and Public Diplomacy**

The literature about the topic under investigation is scarce in the Arab world, Libya included. However, many studies have been conducted in developed and developing countries that show the overlap and differences between PR and PD. In the context of the commonalities between the two fields, Dodd & Collins (2017), Signitzer & Coombs (1992) and Vanc & Fitzpatrick (2016) assert that there are huge similarities between both disciplines especially regarding their roles in building relationships. However, differences do also exist. In this respect, Fitzpatrick et al., (2013) state that despite the fact that PR and PD are intertwined, there are differences between the two fields.

In this study, PR and PD have been discussed in terms of the commonalities and the differences between them; and the methods that have been used by Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts to build relations between the two countries. In addition, this study has investigated what is the most applicable concept in building the Libyan-Italian ties, PR or PD. The study's findings have revealed that there are similarities as well as differences between the two fields. With regards to the overlap between the two fields, the study has confirmed that both disciplines complement one another, and that it is difficult to conceive them as parallel lines, especially in terms of their roles in building relationships, while the differences lie in the nature of practicing PR and PD. It has also been made clear that practising PD is more formal than PR. In other words, practising PR could be considered as

a lesser responsibility than practising PD, particularly in terms of building relationships among governments. Regarding the convergences between PR and PD, the study proven that building relationships and maintaining on-going relations among governments are the main bridge that links the two fields. As an example, the two-way symmetric model, the cultural interpreter model and the personal influence model have been practised in both fields in order to build and maintain the Libyan-Italian relationships. This could be considered as another overlap between PR and PD. In terms of the role of PR and PD in building relations between Libya and Italy, the study has found evidence suggesting that PR and PD have been equally practised in order to build long-term relationships as well as maintain on-going relations between the two countries. PR and PD are thus considered to be very important tools that should be utilised by governmental and non-governmental organisations that seek to build or maintain their ties with other organisations as well as their various audiences.

### **7.3. Original Contribution to Knowledge**

The contribution of this PhD thesis goes beyond identifying the role of PR and PD in building the Libyan-Italian relations. It should be recognised that despite the fact that there is no existing literature about the topic in Libya or the Arab world in general, this thesis has been built based on literature conducted in developed and developing countries, as explained earlier. In other words, the purpose of this work is not to develop a new theory or model in the field of PR, but rather to apply existing theories and models that have been applied by many studies and proved their roles in building relationships (e.g. Abdelhay, 2014; Al-Enad 1992; Creedon, 1993; Diab, 2010; Grunig & Grunig, 1992; Huang, 2000; Lyra, 1991). Thus, the significant original contribution of the thesis to the current state of knowledge emerges from the implementation of this research in the light of Libyan political, economic and cultural variables. Furthermore, this work has investigated to what extent PR models and theories could be practised in developing countries, with Libya as a case study. Furthermore, it has sought to find out the possibility of applying these models to the field of PD and



identify the similarities and differences between PR and PD regarding their roles in building relationships, in light of the Libyan-Italian ties.

This thesis contributes to knowledge from a practical, theoretical and a methodological perspective. It is worth mentioning that PR models and theories have been derived mainly from Western countries' point of view, where institutions and democratic systems work differently from developing countries. Furthermore, these models and theories have had their roles highlighted in creating and maintaining relations among organisations. This work thus answers the calls of many PR scholars who have requested applying PR models and theories to different cultures, especially in developing countries, and asked to link the PR profession with other disciplines in terms of theory and practice to make sure that these models and theories could be applied at the international level (e.g. Hayes, 2012; Heath, 2001; Sriramesh & White, 1992; Tench & Yeomans, 2009).

Applying PR models and theories in developing countries such as Libya could provide a reference framework of PR and PD in terms of theory and practice within the Arab world context, including Libya. Thus, In terms of the practice, the study has reinforced that PR models, as a fundamental theoretical framework, play a significant role in building relationships. Furthermore, this study has shown that PR models such as the two-way symmetrical model, the cultural interpreter model and the personal influence model play an important role in building and maintaining the Libyan-Italian relationships. This thesis has thus contributed towards expanding the practical and theoretical body of knowledge by linking PR with PD. In addition, this thesis has added to the current knowledge of both PR and PD that the two-way symmetrical model, the cultural interpreter model and the personal influence model are the most important models that could be used in building relationships, compared with other approaches. Moreover, this work has pointed out that the three aforementioned models are the bridge that connects PR with PD in terms of theory and practice.

This study has linked PR with PD in order to find out their roles in building relationships. As such, in addition to the existing literature in developed and developing countries about the topic under investigation, the study has reinforced the importance of both fields in building relationships. For instance, the study has highlighted the fact that Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts used PR and PD equally in order to build and promote Libyan-Italian relations. With regards to building relationships, the thesis endorses that the four relationship components, as presented by Hon & Grunig (1999), which include control mutuality, satisfaction, trust, and commitment, are very important tools in building relationships. Furthermore, these dimensions are a fundamental framework for measuring and evaluating long-term relationships between partners. Regarding the similarities and differences between PR and PD, the study has confirmed that both fields are an integral part of each other, particularly concerning their roles in building relationships, while their differences lie in the nature of practicing them, with PD being more formal than PR.

From a methodological perspective, the qualitative research is the basis of this study, as twenty Libyan and Italian diplomats have been interviewed. The analytical method and techniques of thematic analysis have been used in order to obtain information based on the participants' knowledge. As argued by Braun & Clarke (2006), the thematic analysis could be considered as the most common kind of analysis in qualitative studies. This thesis has indeed proved and emphasised the importance of this approach in identifying themes during the process of analysing the data. Furthermore, the relational approach has also been applied in order to identify its role in building relationships as well as to use it to measure and evaluate the Libyan-Italian relations. In this respect, Bruning & Ledingham (1998) argue that the relational approach could be considered as a quantitative method, particularly when it tracks relationship changes over time. However, several scholars such as Almutairi (2013), and Jahansoozi (2007) assert that the relational approach could be applied as a qualitative approach in order to evaluate and measure a relationship status among partners. In light of

this debate, this thesis endorses the latter studies; and as such, this could be considered as a small contribution in the context of methodology.

#### **7.4. Limitations and Future Research**

As argued by Almutairi (2013), there can be no research study without limitations. Likewise, this study has faced several limitations. Time and resources could be considered as two of the most significant obstacles that have encountered me throughout the period of the PhD, as; for instance, I had to travel to Libya, Egypt and Italy in order to collect the data. The interview process was the key qualitative tool for data collection. Thus, for the purpose of this study, twenty diplomats, including Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers and Ambassadors, have been interviewed. The disparity in the centres of power between me and the diplomatic elites, in terms of getting access to those elites, could be considered as another dilemma that faced me. Furthermore, the lack of empirical research about the topic in Libya and the Arab world at large, along with the scarcity of studies about the Libyan society in the English language, could too be considered as an another major challenge.

With regards to future work, as argued by Fitzpatrick et al., (2013), Ki (2015), L'Etang (2009) and Vanc & Fitzpatrick (2016) more studies are needed in order to detect convergences, as well as differences between PR and PD. In this context, this study is the first empirical study in the Arab world that attempts to understand the role of PR and PD in building relationships between Libya and Italy in light of the Libyan environmental variables. The study's findings have revealed the importance of both disciplines in building relationships. Consequently, this thesis calls for more empirical studies that link PR with PD, especially in Libya and the Arab world at large. Libya has been through many different stages in terms of its relations with Arab, African and Western countries. For instance, during the last ten years of Colonel Gaddafi's rule in Libya, the country entered negotiations with the international community in order to resolve several issues such as the Lockerbie case and the WMD program. Similarly, after the fall of Gaddafi regime in 2011, Libyan governments have sought to build

bilateral relations with other nations based on mutual benefit. Thus, future research needs to address the role of PR and PD in building Libya's relations with other countries such as the USA, the UK, France, the African union, and the Arab League. It would also be interesting to investigate the role of PR and PD in building relationships in other Arab countries. In these contexts, this study could serve as an appropriate reference framework for researchers in the Arab world who aim to study the role of PR and PD in building relationships.

Generally speaking, further work should be conducted based on conceptualisations that have been already undertaken by many scholars in both fields such as Signitzer & Coombs (1992), Signitzer & Wasmer (2006), Cull (2009) and L'Etang (2009) and link them with relationship management. Furthermore, more comparative studies between developed and developing countries, particularly in the Arab world, concerning the environmental differences, such as culture and the political system, and their effect on building relationships are required. This would not only increase the convergences between PR and PD but also widen the horizon of both fields in terms of theory and practice.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Interview Questions Guide

### Background Information

Take me back through the history in your career that brought you to the Diplomatic corp.

- Why did you choose a career in Diplomacy?
- Why did you choose to work for the Diplomatic corp?
- When did you start your career?
- Could you describe the Diplomacy environment/conditions when you first started?  
How different is today?

### Firstly, Public Relations during and after Gaddafi's era.

#### 1. Public Relations during Gaddafi.

- How efficient do you think the PR department was?
- In your opinion, what was the role of public relations departments in order to establish relationships with other countries, especially with Italy?
- How important was cultural understanding when trying to establish public relations?
- How about political culture?
- Which kind of approach was used in order to establish a relationship with Italy?  
(One-way communication, information model etc.)

#### 2. Public Relations after Gaddafi.

- How easy or difficult is it to establish relations today, especially with Italy?
- How important is cultural understanding today? Can you give me a few examples?

- What is the role of the current government? How easy is to establish relationships under these socio-political conditions?
- Which approach or models do you prefer when establishing relationship with other countries? Can you give me an example?

### **Secondly, Public Diplomacy during and after Gaddafi's era.**

#### **1. Public Diplomacy during Gaddafi.**

- Was PD an integral communication tool during Gaddafi?
- Was PD a useful tool to establish long-term relationships?
- To what extent did PD assist Gaddafi to establish relationship with Italy?
- What type of diplomacy processes was used?

#### **2. Public Diplomacy after Gaddafi.**

- How important is Public Diplomacy between Libya and Italy today?
- To what extent do you agree that the current political situation has promoted distrust between the two governments?
- How committed are both countries to PD today?
- What kind of diplomacy strategies have been used to re-establish relationship?
- Can you see any obstacles?
- What do you think the future holds?

### **Thirdly, Public Relations and Public Diplomacy.**

- What are the similarities between PR and PD?
- What are the differences between PR and PD?
- Are PR and PD used in similar ways?
- Are PR and PD used to establish relationships?
- Which one is more applicable in the case of Libya and Italy, in your opinion?

## Appendix 2: Interview Questions Guide in Arabic Language

### خلفية عن حياتك المهنية :

• هل لك ان تعطيني خلفية عن حياتك المهنية وبشكل خاص عن حياتك الدبلوماسية، من فضلك ؟

• لماذا العمل في السلك الدبلوماسي ؟

• متى كانت البداية ؟

• هل لك ان تصف لي البيئة الدبلوماسية عند بداية عملك مقارنة بها اليوم ؟

أولاً : العلاقات العامة خلال وبعد عهد القذافي .

#### 1- العلاقات العامة خلال عهد القذافي :-

- ما هي فاعلية العلاقات العامة خلال عهد القذافي ؟
- في رأيك ما كان دور العلاقات العامة في تأسيس العلاقات الليبية الايطالية ؟
- ما مدى أهمية الثقافة في بناء العلاقات بين ليبيا و ايطاليا ؟
- ما تأثير الجانب السياسي ؟
- أي إستراتيجية اتبعتها نظام القذافي في بناء العلاقات الليبية الايطالية ؟

#### 2- العلاقات العامة بعد القذافي :-

- ما مدى سهولة بناء علاقات هذه الأيام وخاصة مع ايطاليا ؟
- أهمية الثقافة في بناء علاقات ، هل لك ان تعطيني أمثلة من فضلك ؟
- ما دور الحكومات المتعاقبة بعد 17 فبراير 2011 في بناء العلاقات الليبية الايطالية ؟ وخاصة في ظل الظروف التي مرت بها ليبيا بعد الثورة ؟
- ما الأسلوب المتبع في بناء او المحافظة على العلاقات بين ليبيا وايطاليا ؟

ثانيا : الدبلوماسية العامة خلال وبعد عهد القذافي .

#### 1- الدبلوماسية العامة خلال عهد القذافي :-

- هل استخدمت الدبلوماسية العامة كأداة للاتصال في بناء العلاقات بين ليبيا وايطاليا ؟
- هل كان لها دور في بناء العلاقات الليبية الايطالية ؟

- الي أي مدى ساعدت نظام القذافي في بناء علاقات طويلة المدى مع إيطاليا ؟
- أي نوع من الدبلوماسية استخدمها نظام القذافي ؟

## 2- الدبلوماسية العامة بعد القذافي :-

- ما أهمية الدبلوماسية العامة كأداة اتصال بين ليبيا وإيطاليا ؟
- هل أثرت الظروف الراهنة على العلاقات بين البلدين ؟
- ما مدى التزام كلا الطرفين ؟
- أي نوع من مناهج الدبلوماسية العامة يتم استخدامها في بناء العلاقات او المحافظة عليها بين كلا البلدين ؟
- هل يوجد عقبات بين البلدين ؟
- ماذا تتوقع عن مستقبل العلاقات بين ليبيا وإيطاليا ؟

## ثالثا : العلاقات العامة و الدبلوماسية العامة :-

- ما أوجه التشابه بين العلاقات العامة والدبلوماسية العامة ؟
- ما أوجه الاختلاف بينهما ؟
- هل يتم استخدامهما بنفس الطرق ؟
- هل يتم استخدام كلا المفهومين في بناء العلاقات ؟
- في رأيك أيهما أكثر ملائمة العلاقات العامة أو الدبلوماسية العامة في بناء العلاقات الليبية الإيطالية ؟



### Appendix 3: Research Information Sheet

ASS/RE5

**School of Arts and Social Sciences – Research Ethics Framework  
Research Information – for participants**

**To be completed by the researcher and supplied to participants.  
The researcher must ensure the participant has ample time to read all of the information  
before asking them to sign the Participant Consent form (ASS-RE4)**

Name of project

The Role of Public Relations and Public Diplomacy in Building Relationships between Libya and Italy in the Gaddafi and Post-Gaddafi Era.

Research Organisation

Northumbria University

Researcher's name

Suliman Saleh

Who is funding the research?

Libyan government

What is the purpose of the research?

The aims of this study are to (1) evaluate the methods, purpose, and significance of the role played by public relations and public diplomacy in establishing / re-establishing better ties between Libya and Italy; (2) to explore the relationship between public relations and public diplomacy nexus in contemporary societies using the Libya-Italian case study.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The raw material from interviews like transcripts and researcher notes are going to remain strictly confidential and will be kept in a safe cabinet until this research comes to an end. Also, appropriate and relevant quotes will be used in my thesis and any subsequent publications from this (e.g. conference papers). Participants have the right to refuse to grant consent for any interview material to be used in future researches or publications.

Why have I been chosen?

Because your knowledge and expertise is relevant and appropriate to the purpose of this research.  
Additionally your experience, role and position is crucial and appropriate to the main principles posed by this PhD.

What will I have to do if I agree to take part?

Simply answer some questions and talk about your experiences. With your consent the meeting will be recorded. The researcher will transcribe the recording and send the transcript to you for factual accuracy before using it in any publications.

Will my taking part in this research be kept confidential?

Anonymity will be given to interviewees, in which case a pseudonym will be agreed or the researcher will refer to an 'anonymous source' in any publications.

Who can I contact for further information about this research contact?

Principal supervisor, Dr, Bruce Mutsvairo.  
Email, [Bruce.Mutsvairo@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:Bruce.Mutsvairo@northumbria.ac.uk)  
Phone number, 01912273282

Who should I contact if I wish to make a complaint or report an incident concerning this research?

Second supervisor, Dr, Ibrahim Shaw.  
Email, [ibrahim.shaw@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:ibrahim.shaw@northumbria.ac.uk)  
Phone number, 01912273567

You will be given a copy of this Information Sheet and a copy

## Appendix 4: Participants' Consent Form

ASS/RE4

### School of Arts and Social Sciences – Research Ethics Framework Participant Consent Form

**To be completed by both participant and researcher before research commences**

Name of project

The Role of Public Relations and Public Diplomacy in Building Relationships between Libya and Italy in the Gaddafi and Post-Gaddafi Era.

Organisation(s) initiating research

Northumbria University

Researcher's name

Suliman Saleh

Research Organisation

Northumbria University

Participant's name

I confirm that I have been supplied with and have read and understood an Information Sheet (ASS-RE5) for the research project and have had time to decide whether or not I want to participate. I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

I agree with Northumbria University recording and processing this information about me. I understand that this information will only be used for the purposes set out in the information sheet. I have been told that any data generated by the research will be securely managed and disposed of in accordance with Northumbria University's guidelines.

I am aware that all tapes and documents will remain confidential with only the research team having access to them.

My consent is conditional upon the University complying with its duties and obligations under the Data Protection Act.

Signature of Participant (even if below 18 years old)

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Representative

(if participant is under 18 years old)

Date

I can confirm that I have explained the nature of the research to the above named participant and have given adequate time to answer any questions concerning it.

Signature of Researcher

Date

Any queries regarding Ethics Forms can be directed to Debra Shannon – [debra.shannon@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:debra.shannon@northumbria.ac.uk) – 0191 227 3180

## Appendix 5: Access letters to Participants "Diplomatic Elites"

### 1. A letter from Libyan Foreign Ministry

#### A. In Arabic Language

Government of National Accord  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

حكومة الوفاق الوطني  
وزارة الخارجية

Serial n. \_\_\_\_\_ الرقم الإشاري : 459

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ مذكرة شفوية التاريخ : \_\_\_\_\_

تهدي وزارة الخارجية بحكومة الوفاق الوطني ( إدارة الشؤون الأوروبية ) أطيب تحياتها إلى سفارة جمهورية إيطاليا الموقرة في القاهرة، وتتشرف بأن ترفق لها جواز سفر السيد سليمان رابح الشريف صالح، رقم 057906 ( عادي )، وتتشرف بأن تطلب منحه تأشيرة دخول إلى إيطاليا لغرض الزيارة.

علماً بأن المعني هو طالب دراسات دقيقة (دكتوراه) في المملكة المتحدة في مجال العلاقات الدولية والدبلوماسية ويجري حالياً بحثاً حول العلاقات بين ليبيا وإيطاليا قبل وبعد ثورة 17 من فبراير، ويحتاج في هذا الإطار القيام ببحث ميداني وإجراء مقابلات مع عدد من المسؤولين الليبيين السابقين والحاليين بالسفارة الليبية في روما وكذلك مع المسؤولين والأكاديميين الإيطاليين المهتمين بالعلاقات بين البلدين.

تفتنم وزارة الخارجية بحكومة الوفاق الوطني (إدارة الشؤون الأوروبية) هذه المناسبة لتعرب من جديد لسفارة جمهورية إيطاليا الموقرة في القاهرة عن أسمى معاني التقدير والاحترام.

إلى / سفارة جمهورية إيطاليا الموقرة في القاهرة.

طرابلس 2016.08.03

إدارة الشؤون الأوروبية

## B. In Italian Language

**ALBURAQ BUREAU**  
Legal Translation  
Emhamed Elmegarif St. near of Aljazaer Square  
Tel/Fax: 21 444 8513 Mob: +218 91 949 1356



طرابلس - ليبيا  
Tripoli - Libya  
Alburaq For Legal Translation

**مكتب البراق**  
للتترجمة القانونية  
شارع إسماعيل القرني - بالقرب من ميدان الجزائر  
هاتف/فاكس: +21 444 8513 نقال: +218 91 949 1356

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**GOVERNO DI RICONCILIAZIONE  
NAZIONALE  
Ministero degli Esteri**

Ref.: 459

**NOTA VERBALE**

Il Ministero degli Esteri nel Governo di Riconciliazione Nazionale (Direzione Affari Europei) presenta i suoi distinti saluti all'Ambasciata d'Italia nel Cairo ed è lieta di allegare il passaporto del Sig. **SULIMAN R. ELSHAREF SALEH** no. 057906 (ordinario) e chiede cortesemente di concedergli un visto d'ingresso in Italia allo scopo di visita.


Ricordiamo che l'interessato è uno student di Dottorato nel regno Unito nel settore delle relazioni internazionali e diplomatiche, e svolge attualmente delle ricerche sulle relazioni tra la Libia e l'Italia prima e dopo la rivoluzione del 17 febbraio ed in questo ambito ha bisogno di eseguire una ricerca sul campo e incontri con una serie di ex e attuali responsabili Libici all'Ambasciata Libica a Roma oltre a responsabili accademici Italiani interessati nelle relazioni tra i due paesi.

Il Ministero degli Esteri presso il Governo di Riconciliazione Nazionale (Direzione Affari Europei) coglie questa occasione per esprimere nuovamente il suo senso di apprezzamento e rispetto verso l'Ambasciata Italiana.

**Firma & Timbro**  
**Ministero Affari Esteri / Direzione Affari Europei**

**A / AMBASCIATA DELLA REPUBBLICA ITALIANA AL CAIRO**

**Tripoli 03/08/2016**



مكتب البراق للتترجمة القانونية  
طرابلس - ليبيا  
Tripoli - Libya  
Alburaq For Legal Translation

## 2. A letter from Libyan Embassy in Rome

السفارة الليبية - إيطاليا  
AMBASCIATA DI LIBIA - ITALIA

وزارة الخارجية  
والتعاون الدولي - ليبيا  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs And International Cooperation - Libya



PROT: 1/28/1318

### NOTA VERBALE

L'Ambasciata di Libia presenta i suoi complimenti all'Onorevole Consolato Generale d'Italia a Londra e si pregia richiedere il cortese rilascio del visto spenge a favore del sotto indicato cittadini Libici :

- **Sig. SALEH SULIMAN RABEH ELSHAREF**, nato a Ajdabya il 22.11.1980 titolare del passaporto ordinario n° KR7J55CL rilasciato il 06.07.2015 e valido fino al 05.07.2023;
- **Sig.ra EL BALAAZI AMINA ALI ABDALLA**, nata a Benghazi il 13.01.1990 titolare del passaporto ordinario n° 509603 rilasciato il 18.01.2011 e valido fino al 16.01.2019;

Il sig. SULIMAN e un studenti di dottorato di relazione internazionale e diplomatiche nel Regno Unito e svolge attualmente una ricerca sulla relazione bilaterale Libia Italia per tale motivo necessita di venire in Italia ospite di questa ambascia per il breve periodo di ricerca.

L'Ambasciata di Libia nel ringraziare coglie l'occasione per rinnovare all'Onorevole Consolato Generale d' Italia a Londra gli atti della sua più alta considerazione.

Roma, li 13 Ottobre 2016

CONSOLATO GENERALE D'ITALIA  
A LONDRA  
Ufficio Visti  
E- mail: [visti.londra@esteri.it](mailto:visti.londra@esteri.it)  
[Consolato.londra@esteri.it](mailto:Consolato.londra@esteri.it)



### 3. A letter from Libyan Embassy in London-Cultural Attaché

Libyan Embassy		سفارة ليبيا
Cultural Attaché - London		الملحقية الثقافية - لندن
وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research		

10-06-2016	التاريخ	2016-06-18410	الرقم الاشاري
01-03-2013	بداية الصرف	9618	رقم الملف
28-02-2017	نهاية الصرف	سليمان رايح الشريف صالح	اسم الطالب
48	عدد اشهر المنحة	393/2012	رقم قرار الإيفاد
30-09-2016	إيقاف الصرف	دكتوراه	الدرجة العلمية
29	الاشهر المصروفة	إعلام	التخصص

إلى من يهمه الأمر  
بعد التحية ،،،،

**الموضوع / تعريف طالب لدراسة حقلية**

تفيد الملحقية الثقافية بأن المذكور أعلاه هو أحد الطلبة الموفدين لدراسة الدكتوراه في مجال الإعلام على حساب الدولة بالمملكة المتحدة ويرغب الطالب في جمع بعض البيانات والمعلومات المتعلقة ببحثه العلمي لذا يرجى تسهيل مهمته وإبداء المساعدة في هذا المجال.

عطيت له هذه الإفادة بناءً على طلبه لاستخدامها فيما يخوله القانون و تعتبر رسمية بعد التوقيع و الختم.

شاكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم  
والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته ،،،،

المرفقات

د. الحسن المصري الفضيل  
الملحق الاكاديمي المساعد



Printed on: 10/06/2016 12:53:50 by: AA274

61-62 Ennismore Gardens, London, SW7 1NH T: +44(0)20 3006 9891 F: +44(0)20 7584 6961 W: culturalaffairs.libyanembassy.org

## **Appendix 6: First phase of Block and File Technique**

Me: Despite the special and privileged relations were between Gaddafi regime and Berlusconi's government, the latter announced at the outset of the Libyan revolution in 2011 abandoned Gaddafi and declared its support and recognition of the NTC as the sole legitimate authority in the country, why in your opinion?

Ambassador 19: Simply, Berlusconi's government knew that Gaddafi regime no longer had control over the country.

Me: To what extent the political and economic changes after the fall of Gaddafi have affected the relations between the two countries?

Ambassador 19: Well, there is no doubt it has affected the relations between the two countries somehow. However, the current situation affects Libya internally as a result of the political divisions, and it has not affected relationships with Italy. From a political and economic perspective, Italy still a strong ally to Libya.

Me: So, in this respect, what is the role of PR whether to build or maintain relationships with Italy?

Ambassador 19: At the outset of the revolution, PR was used by the NTC in order to confirm their commitment to all previous agreements with Italy. While it has been used by Libyan successive governments in order to maintain on-going relations between both countries.

Me: what kind of approach has been applied to build trust and foster relationships between Libyan diplomats and their Italian counterparts?

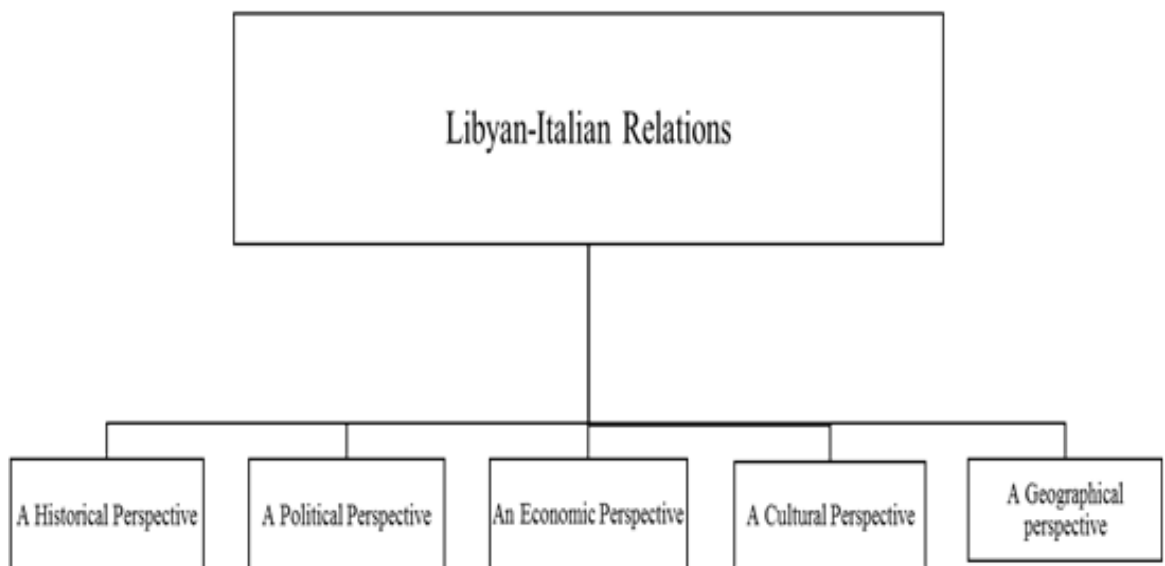
Ambassador 19: Mostly, personal relationships. For example, at the first week of the revolution, Mr. Abdel-Rahman Shalgam defected to the revolution from its outset. Mr. Shalgam is considered as the Godfather of Libyan-Italian relations because he had spent more than ten years in Italy as the Libyan Ambassador to Rome



## Appendix 7: Second Stage of Block and File Technique

Public Relations	Public diplomacy	The overlap between Public Relations and Public Diplomacy
<p><b>Ambassador 14 :</b></p> <p>In the first weeks of the revolution, Italy's policy was hesitant, and before announcing its recognition of the NTC, it was in touch with the Gaddafi regime. Yet, members of the NTC had succeeded in employing PR in order to build bridges and win trust with Italy.</p> <p><b>Foreign Minister 11:</b></p> <p>The new Libyan leaders during the revolution used PR tools in order to reassure the Italian side about previous economic agreements, especially with ENI in the field of energy, as well as other agreements.</p> <p><b>Prime Minister 2:</b></p> <p>It should be noted that Italy has many of interests in Libya most importantly in the energy field. So, the role of PR during the revolution was entirely devoted to showing the commitment of NTC to Italy's interests in Libya and the importance of the relationships between both countries.</p>	<p><b>Prime Minister 3:</b></p> <p>The NTC had succeeded in employing PD as a communication tool through diplomats who have extensive diplomatic experience and good relations with Italian diplomats. Those diplomats, dissidents in the Gaddafi regime, used their connections in order to obtain recognition for the NTC.</p> <p><b>Foreign Minister 8:</b></p> <p>The Libyan Ambassador to Rome was one of the diplomats who defected from the Gaddafi regime. We benefited from his relations with Italian diplomats. This helped Italy to declare its recognition of the NTC.</p> <p><b>Ambassador 13:</b></p> <p>As a result of the active role of PD during the establishment of the NTC, we managed to get the recognition of many countries before the fall of Gaddafi's regime despite Gaddafi being still in control of many parts of Libya at the time.</p>	<p><b>Ambassador 17:</b></p> <p>The convergence between the two concepts lies in their roles in building relationships.</p> <p><b>Prime Minister 6:</b></p> <p>PR and PD are considered to be very important tools that have been used by governments in order to build or maintain relationships.</p> <p><b>Ambassador 16:</b></p> <p>PR and PD pretty much aim towards the same goal which is building and reinforcing relationships between countries.</p> <p><b>Foreign Minister 9:</b></p> <p>The similarity between PR and PD lies in their roles in building and strengthening relationships.</p>

**Appendix 8: Final Thematic Map: elements that shape Libyan-Italian relations**



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